

GIANT FULL-COLOR PINUP OF BILLY JACK

October 1984

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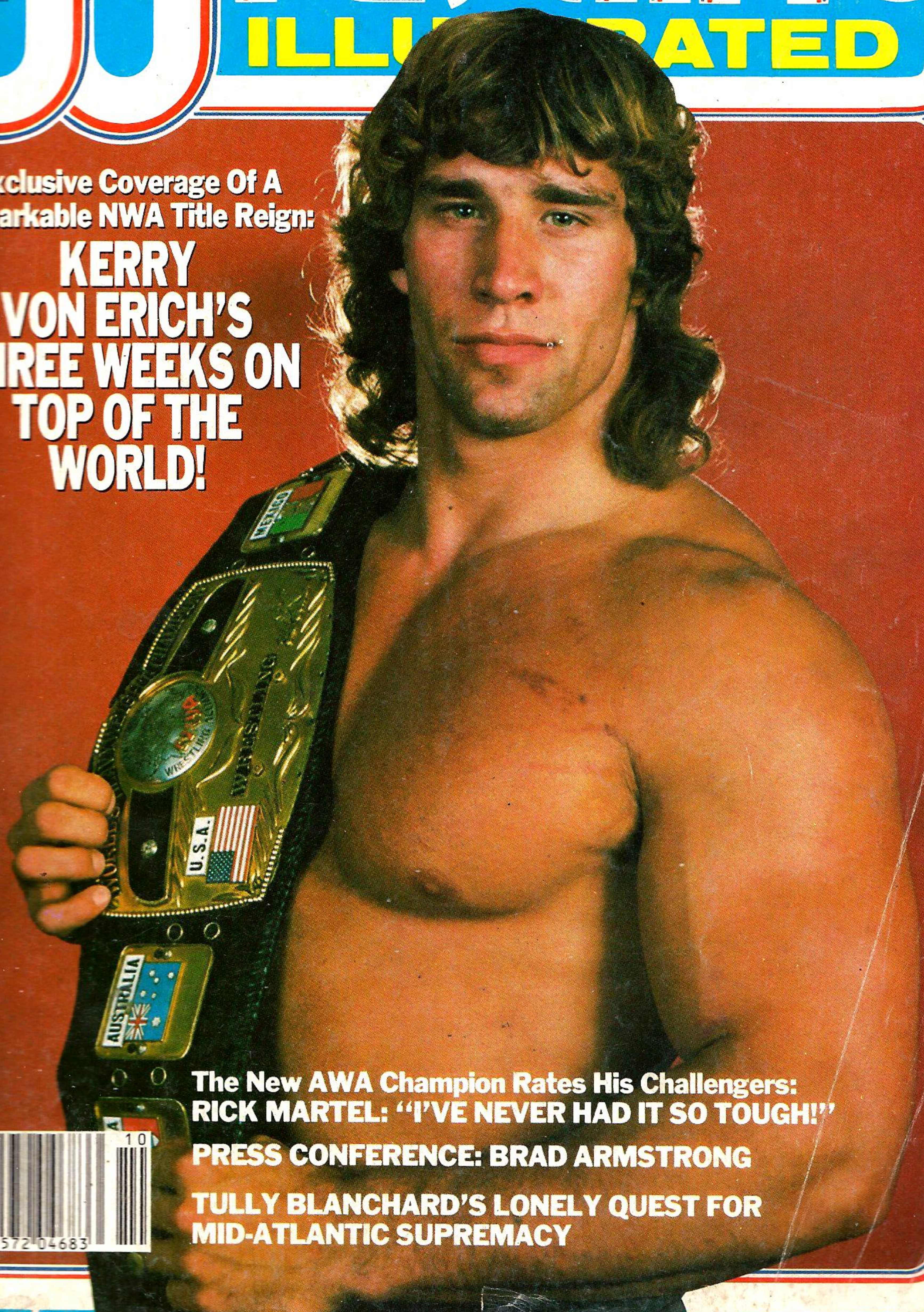
PRO

Wrestling
ILLUSTRATED

T.V.
SPORTS

Exclusive Coverage Of A
Remarkable NWA Title Reign:

**KERRY
VON ERICH'S
THREE WEEKS ON
TOP OF THE
WORLD!**



The New AWA Champion Rates His Challengers:
RICK MARTEL: "I'VE NEVER HAD IT SO TOUGH!"

PRESS CONFERENCE: BRAD ARMSTRONG

**TULLY BLANCHARD'S LONELY QUEST FOR
MID-ATLANTIC SUPREMACY**



RINGSIDE

With Bill Apter

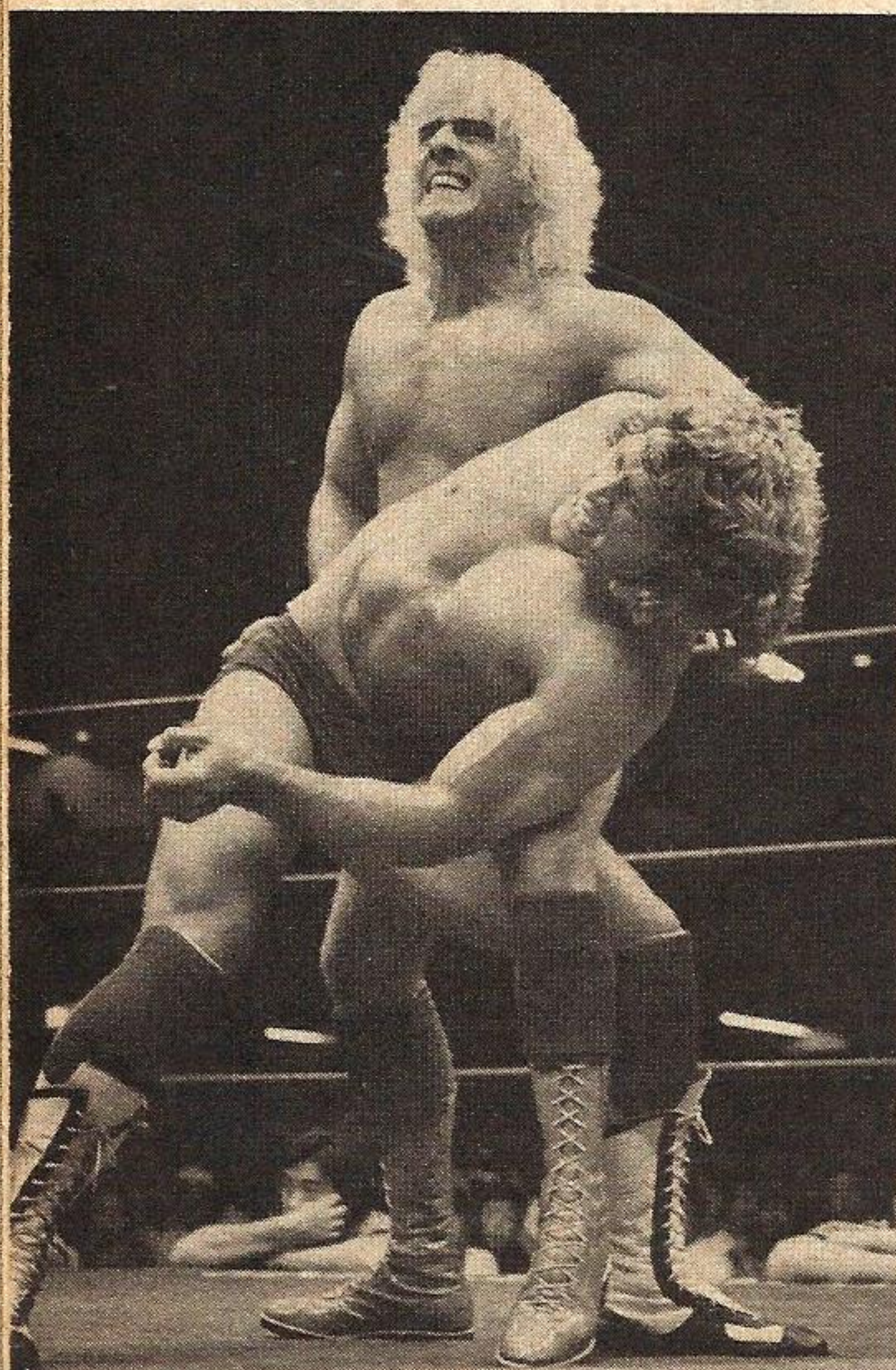
SOME REMARKABLE things are happening in the world of professional wrestling. Since our last issue went to press, the NWA World title has changed hands twice, and we have a new AWA World champion.

Kerry Von Erich defeated **Ric Flair** for the NWA World title in Texas Stadium in Irving, Texas, on May 6 (just three days after the printing deadline of our September issue). Flair regained that title in Yokosuka City, Japan, on May 24. Full details on Kerry's title reign can be found on page 32, and we'd like to add that

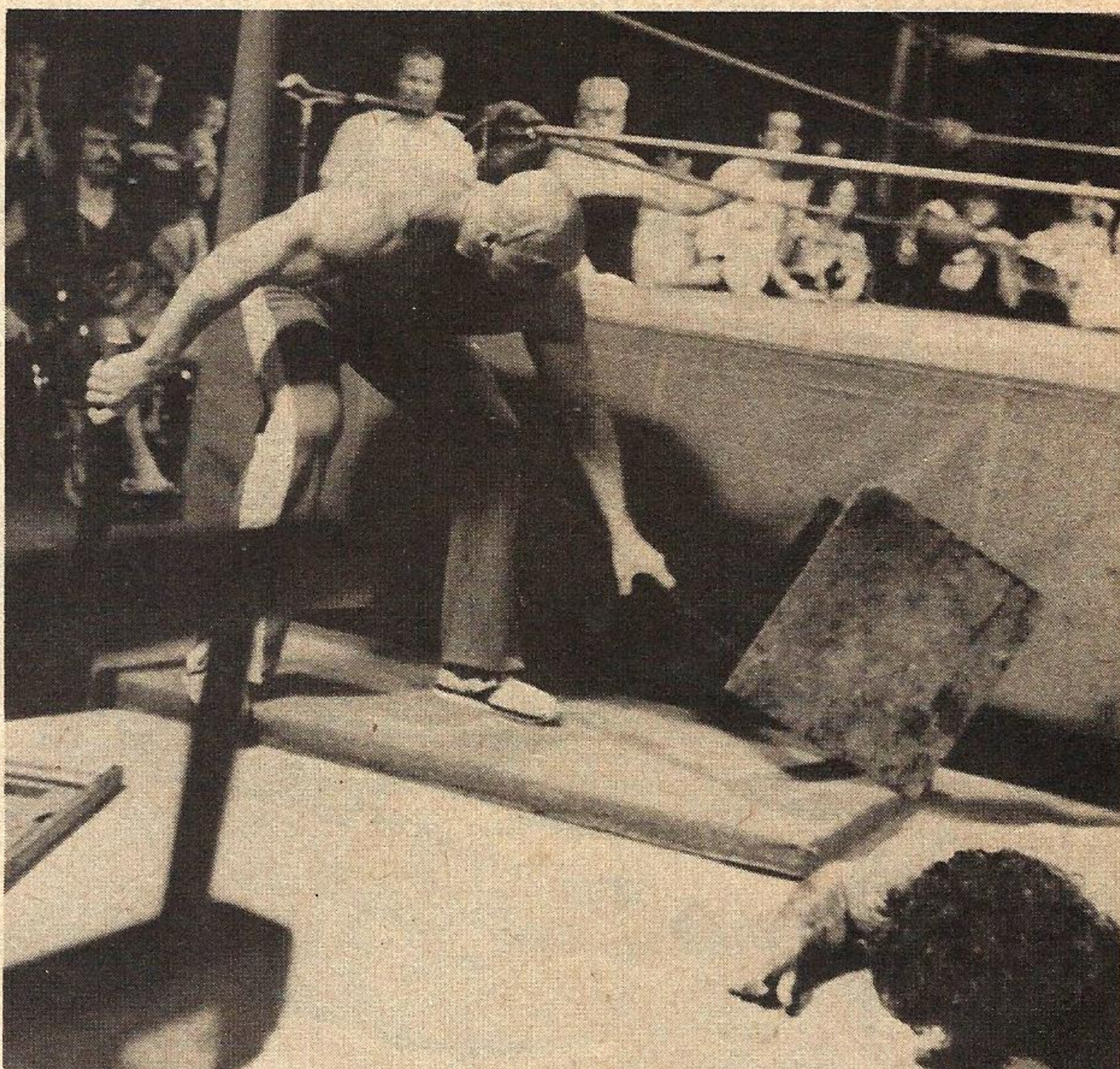
since Flair regained the belt, Kerry has been petitioning the NWA vigorously to receive another rematch for the title.

Over in the AWA, **Rick Martel** pinned the shoulders of **Jumbo Tsuruta** to the mat in the St. Paul Civic Center, St. Paul, Minnesota, on May 13. A story on

remember another time in the past 10 years or more when there has been so much excitement and so much interest surrounding the world titles. I don't think it's premature to say that 1984 will go down as one of the greatest years of all time in professional wrestling history."



Moments before regaining the NWA World title, Ric Flair weakens Kerry Von Erich with an abdominal stretch.



Superstar Graham, hardly the gracious loser in his arm-wrestling match with Billy Jack, breaks Billy's left hand with pieces from the shattered table.

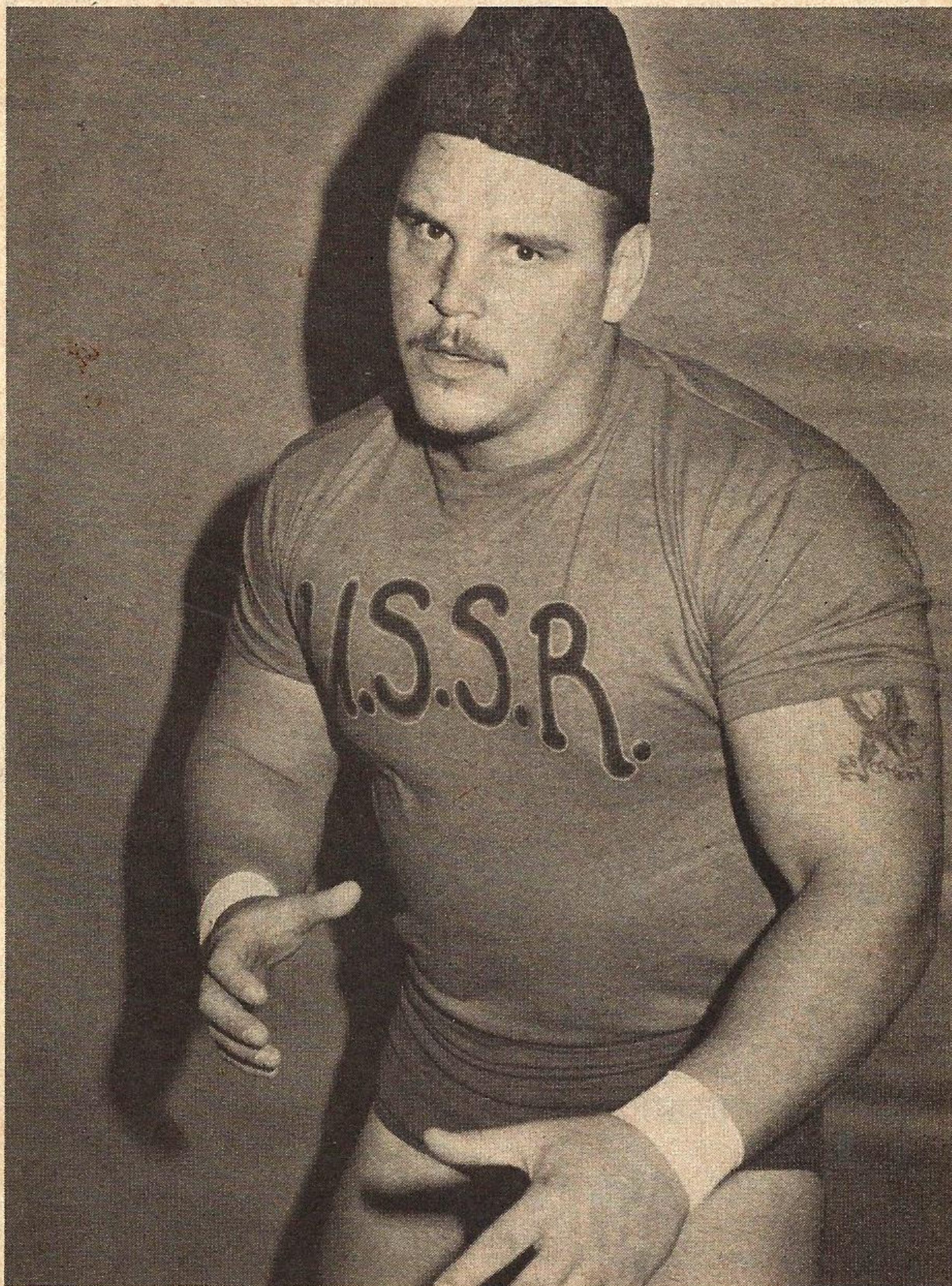
how the new champion views his challengers can be found on page 28.

"This has truly been a remarkable month in the world of professional wrestling," notes Editor-in-Chief **Peter King**. "I can't

Florida heavyweight champion **Billy Jack's** hand was broken during an arm-wrestling contest with **Superstar Billy Graham**. The contest had been set up due to the continuing rivalry between
(Continued on page 54)

KING'S COURT

By Peter King



When Krusher Darsow became a pro wrestler, he was a hero in his home town of Thief River Falls, Minnesota. Now that he has become Krusher Khrushchev and has stated his allegiance to the Soviet Union, the town doesn't even want to know about him.

THERE MUST HAVE been something lost in the translation. How else could a young man from the heart of middle America spew out such venom at the country in which he was born?

Krusher Khrushchev is one of the most hated men in the Mid-South area. I know wrestling fans dislike men like Nikolai Volkoff, Iron Shiek, and Ivan Koloff, but at least these men are, in their own way, patriots. They all support the country in which they were born.

But Khrushchev is an American. Fans may dislike Volkoff, Sheik, and Koloff, but they *hate* a turn-coat like Khrushchev.

Khrushchev's real last name is Darsow, and he is originally from Thief River Falls, a small town in northwest Minnesota. I can't understand how a man who grew up in a middle-American state like Minnesota could turn his back on America.

"America is a lie," Khrushchev told me. "I've always known that. Everything we believe in is based on a lie. We're taught in school that the men who founded this country were great freedom-fighters. Not true. They were rich land-owners who only wanted more money for themselves. Some patriots. Do you know that these so-called lovers of liberty had a clause written into the Constitution that said slavery was all right? The American Revolution was fought so the rich could get richer. In fact, it helped enslave the noble working class. But the Russian Revolution was fought so the workers could get more of their fair share. You ask me why I love Russia? I ask you how could you love America?"

I asked Khrushchev about his boyhood in Thief River Falls. Certainly a little town like that would instill good American values in a young man. He laughed at the suggestion.

"Small-town America, mom and apple pie, right?" he said. "Let me
(Continued on page 56)

DRESSING CONFIDENTIAL ROOM

By Stu Saks

I'M WORRIED. I'm beginning to understand Matt Brock. For years Matt has told me that the best vantage point for viewing a wrestling match is from an upper-level seat. I refused to believe him. When I was younger, I always sat up on top. But that was by necessity.

Now that I was able to get press credentials, I wanted to be at ringside.

Matt invited me to go with him to the big card at the Byrne Meadowlands Arena in May. You know, in my five years here, that was the first time Matt had asked me to go

to a match with him. I was so honored that I accepted his offer without thinking.

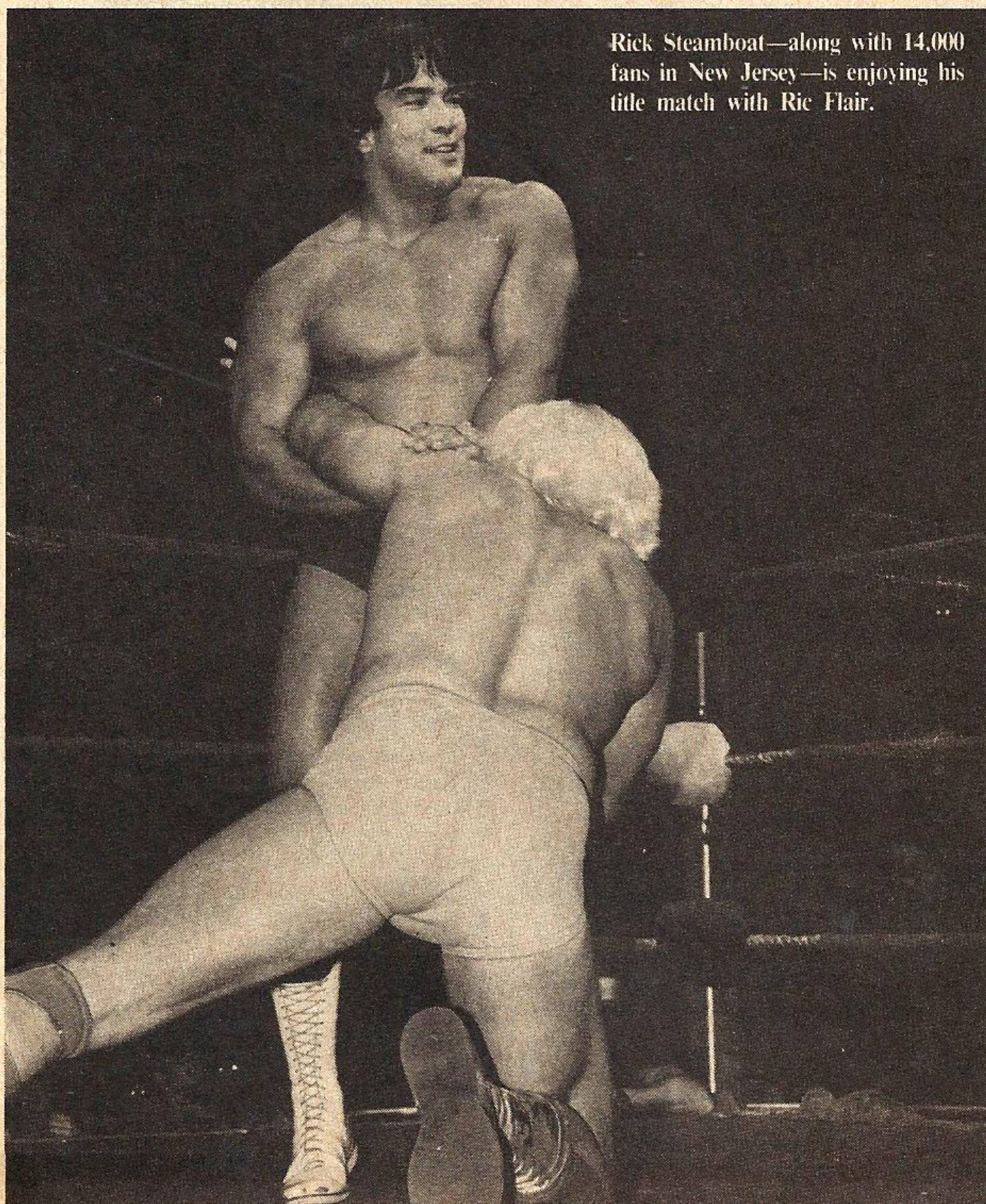
"Great, Matt," I said excitedly, "I'll call and set us up for press passes."

"Uh, uh, Stuie boy," Matt said, shaking his head, "here's your ticket. I bought 'em at the box office."

I didn't have to look at the ticket. I knew it was going to be within the first five rows—counting down, that is, from the roof of the 20,000-seat arena. I had counted on being right in on the action for this card, but I guess I was trapped. Oh, well. At least I would be among the 14,000 fans fortunate enough to see this historic card of wrestling. (Had it not been for about two inches of rainfall that day, the arena certainly would have been sold out.)

This would be a very special evening in New Jersey. Not only would the fans be treated to a card that included the top wrestlers from the Georgia and Mid-Atlantic areas, but, more significantly, they would be treated to a piece of history as well. The Meadowlands show was first card of NWA wrestling held in the New York-metropolitan area since the early 1960s, when Buddy Rogers was the champion of the world. During the next two decades, when Bruno Sammartino ruled the WWF, there were few attempts by other federations

(Continued on page 58)



Rick Steamboat—along with 14,000 fans in New Jersey—is enjoying his title match with Ric Flair.

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

Every month, our reporters will compile wrestlers' most revealing quotes. Often catching the grapplers with their guards down, our reporters will work endlessly in obtaining interesting quotes on a variety of subjects.

TED DIBIASE

"Brad Armstrong, every wrestling fan in the country is waiting to see if you're gonna turn out to be a chicken like that old man of yours. They're waiting to see if you're man enough to get in the ring with me or The Spoiler. Well, I don't think you are. I don't think you'll ever be, either, so why don't you just give me the belt now, and save yourself some pain."



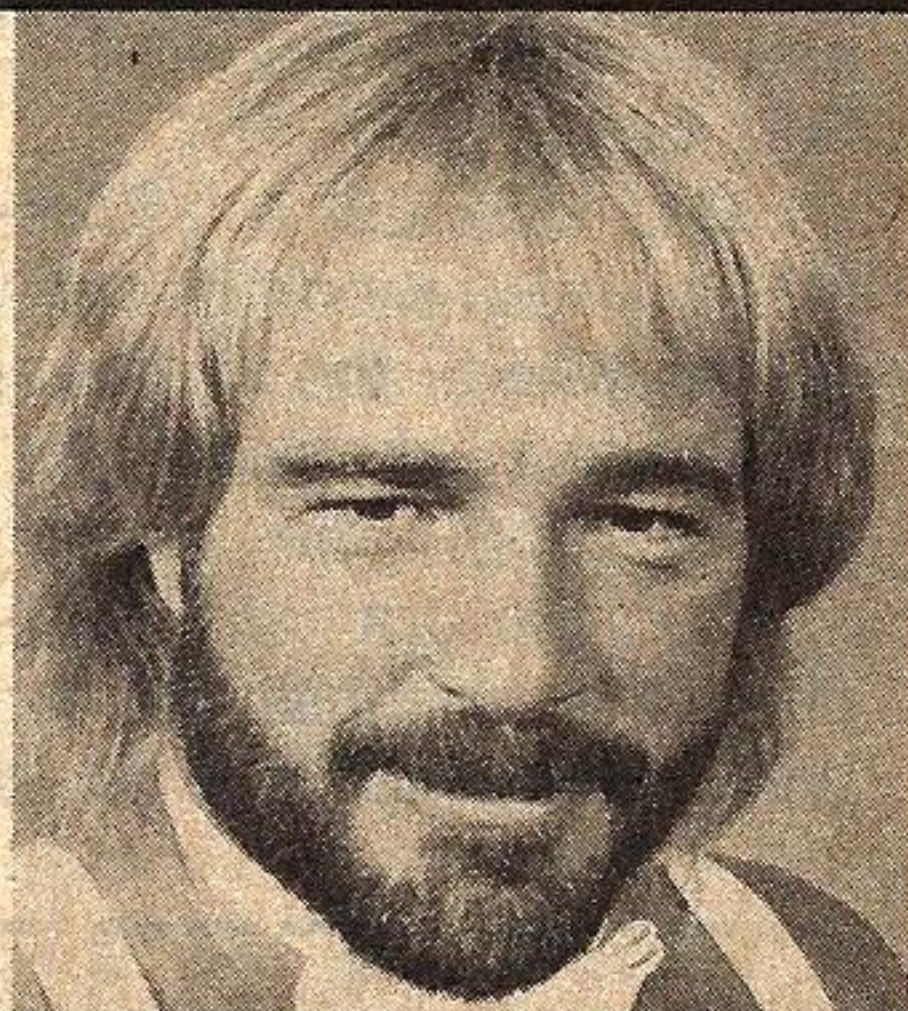
TERRY GORDY

"Goin' on the road, brother. Goin' to the Mid-Atlantic. Michael Hayes is working on some new pick-up lines for you ladies. Yeah, we're gonna wrestle, too. They're bringing in The Road Warriors, and I think we're supposed to be scared or something. Trust me, we're not scared. We're ready. We're *always* ready."



STEVE KEIRN

"Stan Lane and I were wrestling Larry Zbyszko and Steve Regal the other night. I know that the fans don't really like Regal and Zbyszko, but throwing things in the ring isn't the thing to do. Someone could get hurt, like the ref, the fans at ringside, or even us. I hope that none of our fans do that. It's a dangerous thing to do."



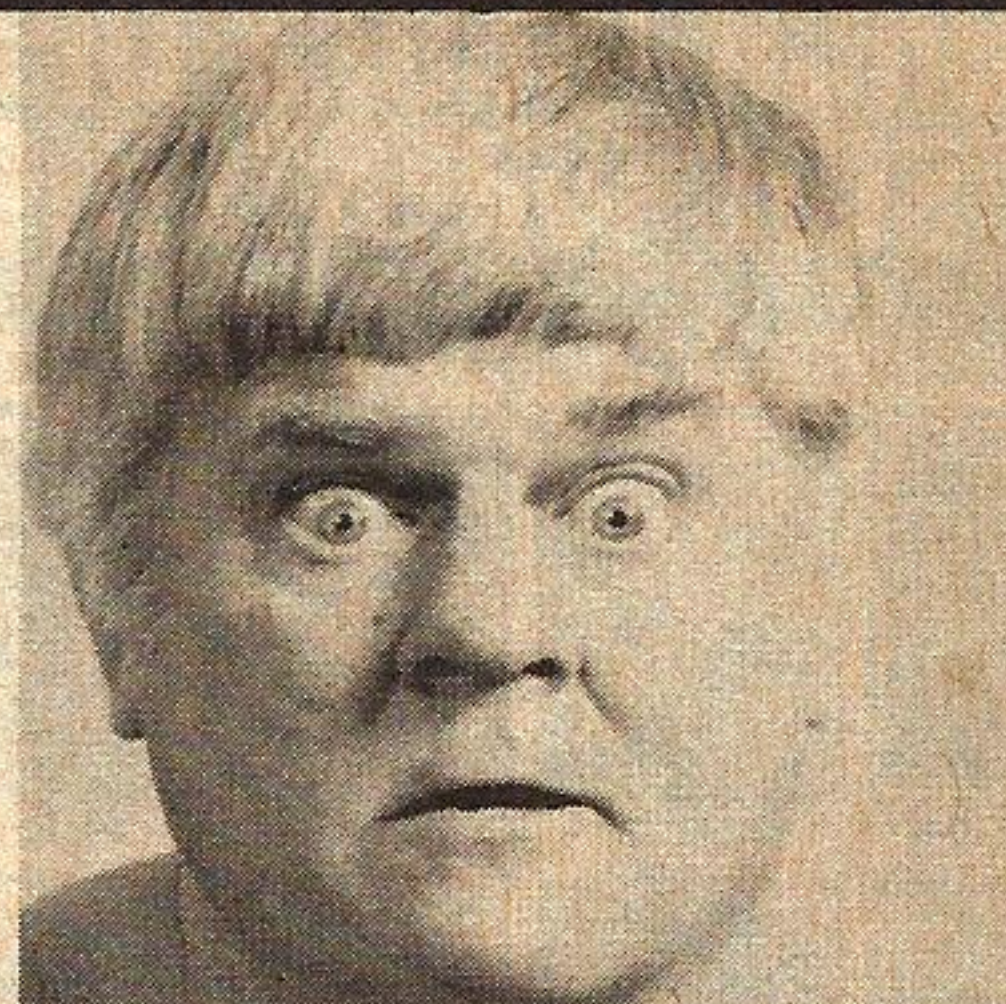
KEN TIMBS

"Eric Embry and I are The Fabulous Blonds, the most incredible tag team Southwest Championship Wrestling has ever seen. Even if we weren't the greatest wrestlers, we'd still be stars. When you look like we do, you're gonna get noticed, there's just no way around it. We could be rock stars, movie stars—whatever we want. We were destined for stardom."



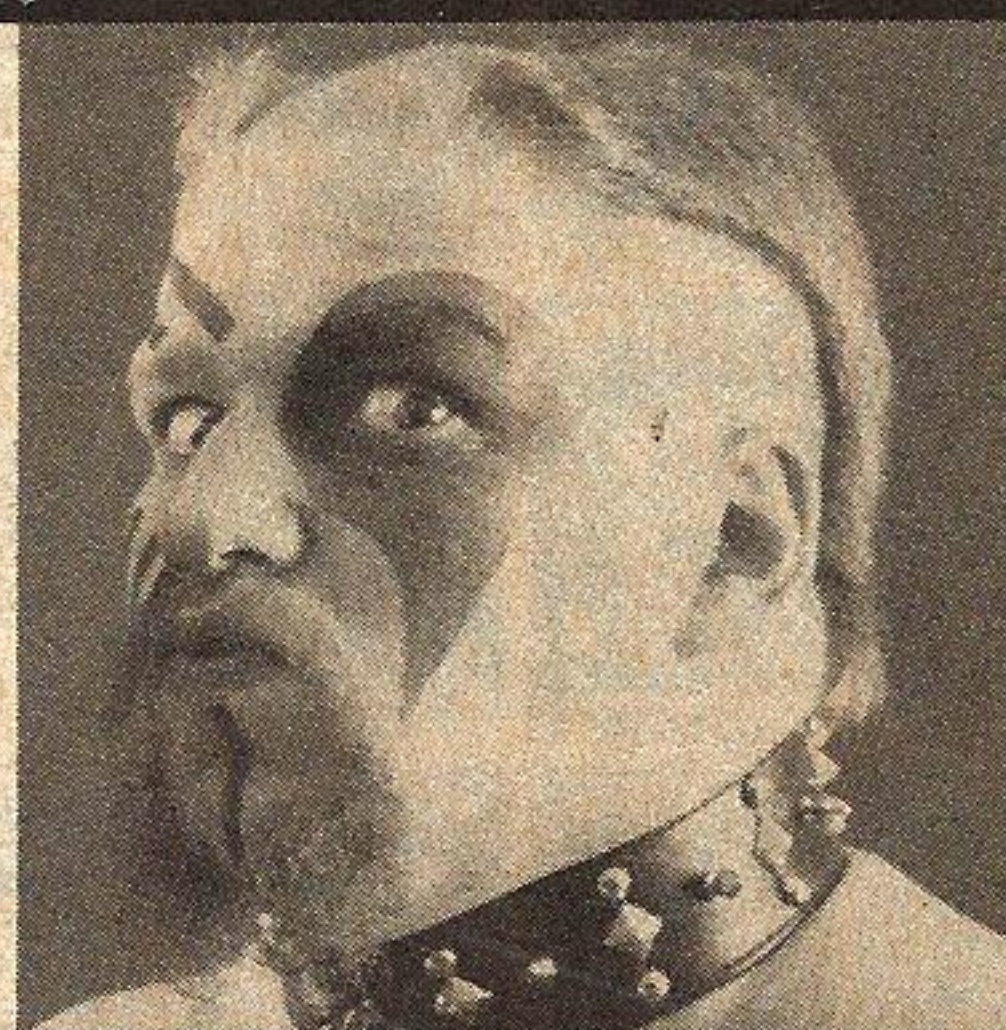
CRUSHER

"I feel like a 20-year-old again. The AWA tag team title has given me new life. I don't know about Von Raschke, but I feel young. I'm ready to do it all over again. I'm ready for the best cigars, the best restaurants, the best women, and the top titles in wrestling. I had it when I was 20, and now I'm gonna have it all over again."



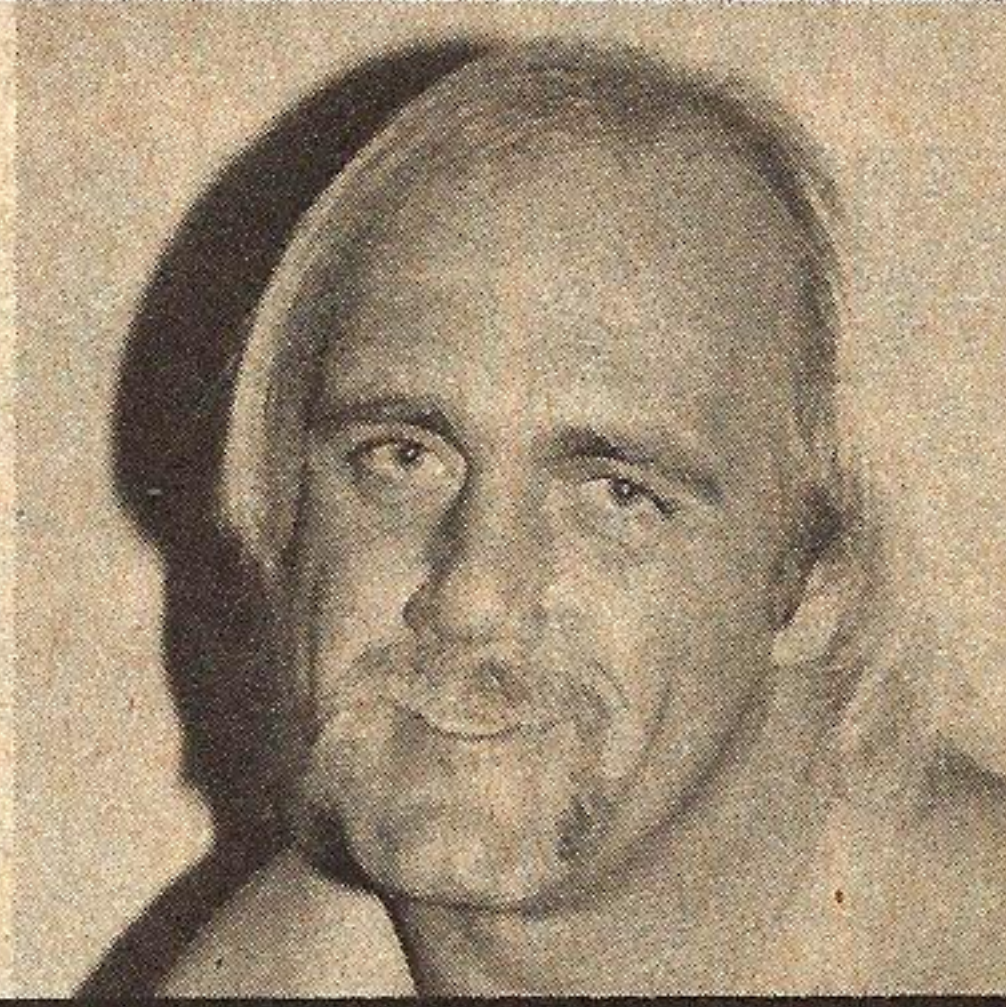
ROAD WARRIOR HAWK

"Billy Jack—what kind of a pansy name is that, huh? This guy thinks he's hot. Well, just look at me, pansy. I want to see you stand between me and Animal and tell us you've got a better body. Sure, you look slick, but when it comes down to size, definition, and power, there's no one like The Road Warriors. We're the biggest and the best."



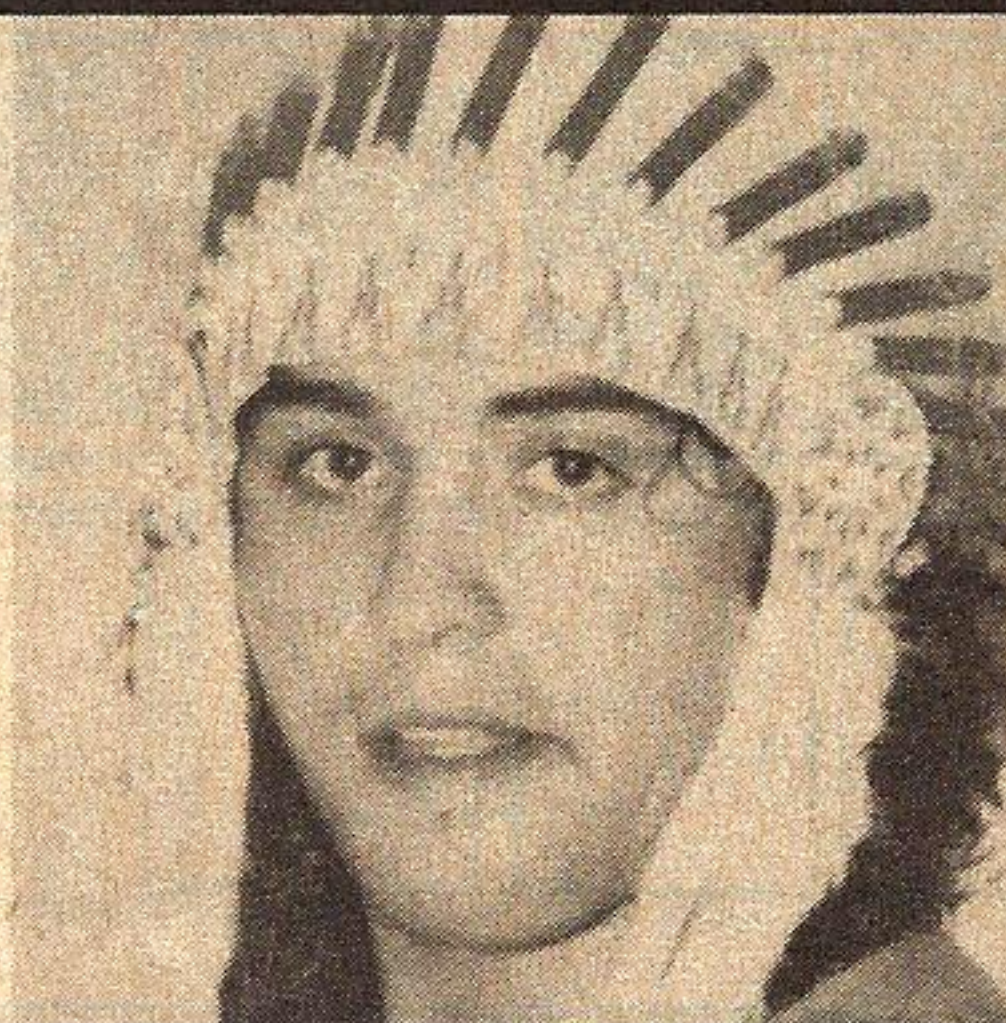
HULK HOGAN

"I have never, in all of my life, seen anything that has the power of Hulkmania. When I go to the arenas, when I see people on the street, people recognize the Hulkster and they go wild. It's great, it's—it's . . . it's so exciting I'm having trouble talking about it. Hulkmania, it's the ultimate force, and I'm the ultimate male."



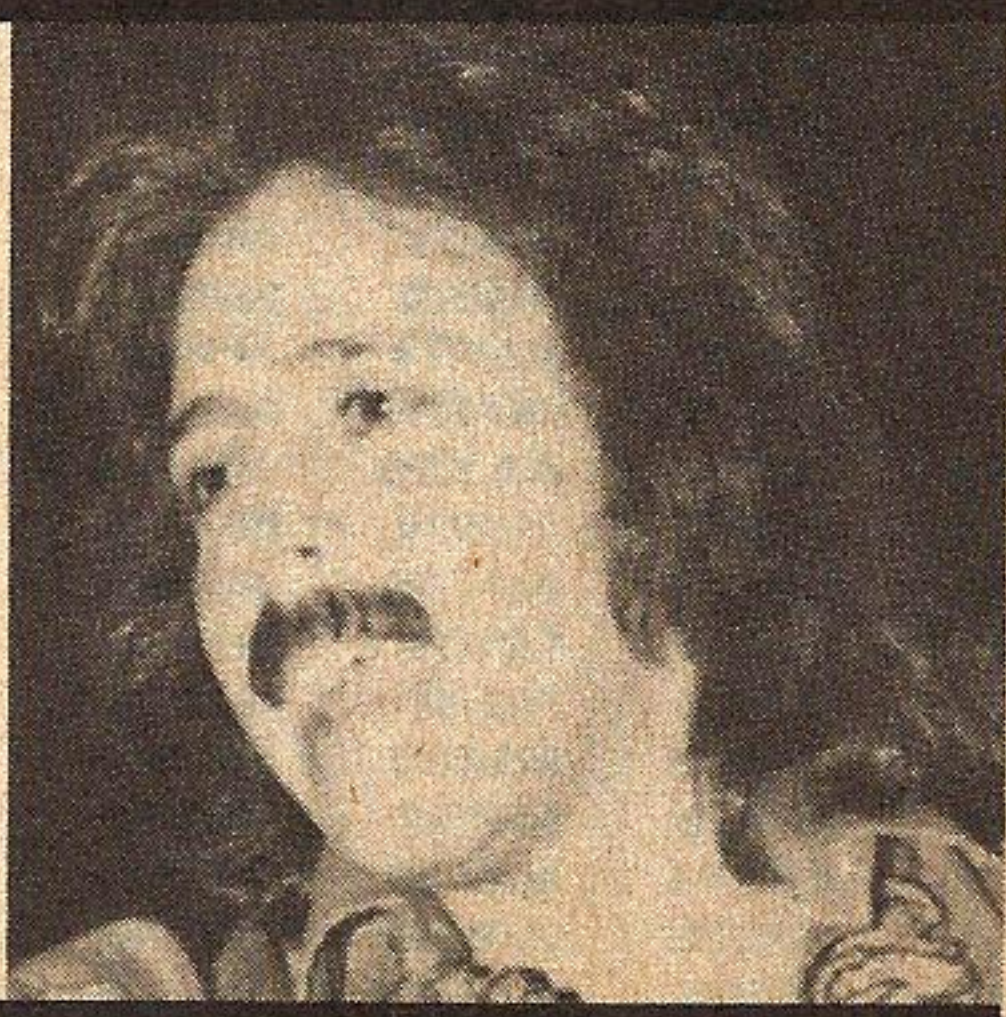
MARK YOUNGBLOOD

"Kernodle and Koloff might have gotten the best of us at the Meadowlands, but that doesn't mean that Pistol Pez Whatley and I won't be back. We're gonna keep trying until we find a way to beat them. We're already a better team. We just have to figure out how to combat their illegal tactics. And we will."



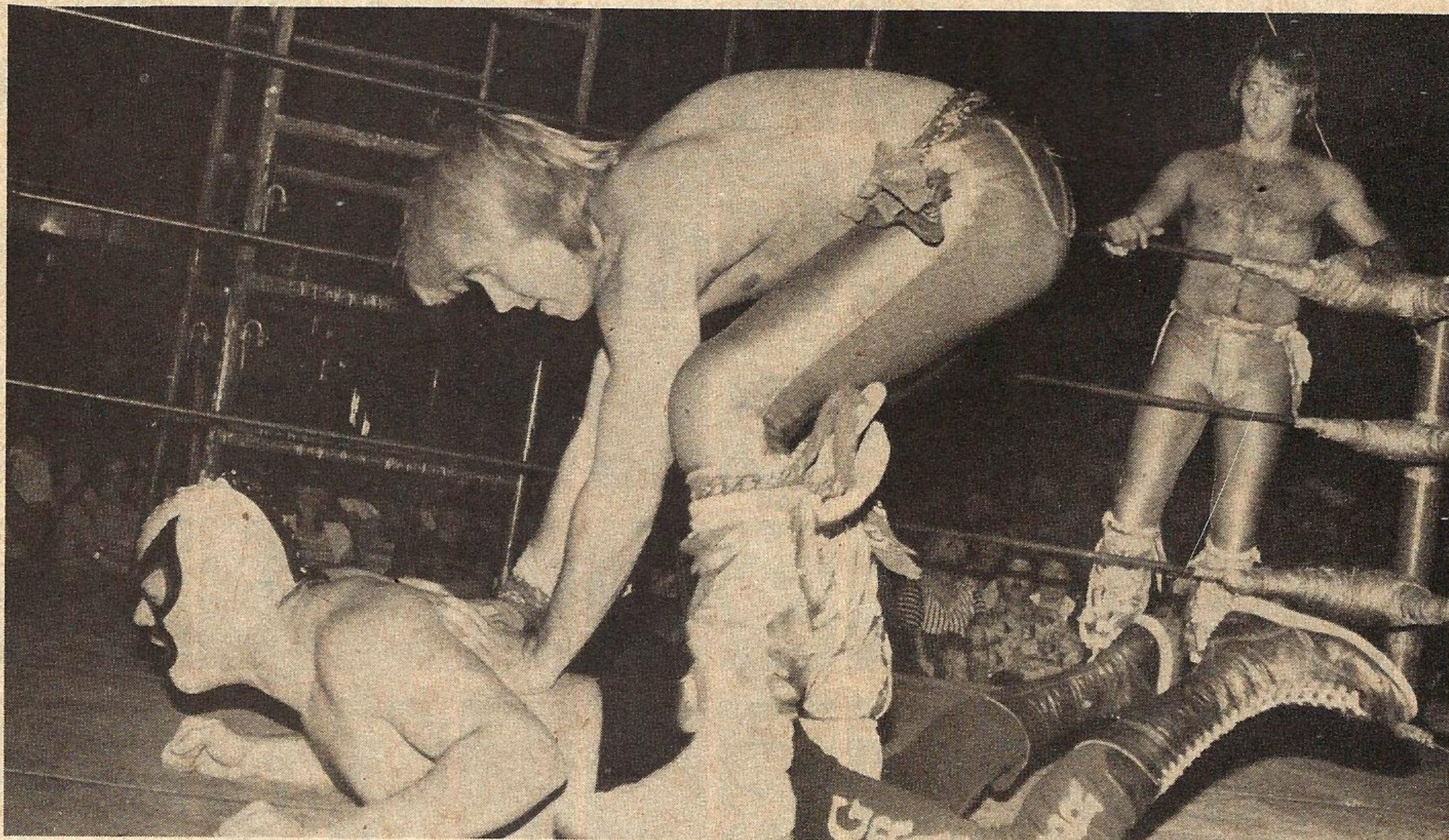
JIMMY HART

"Jim Neidhardt, you're a thief. I spend years collecting a stable of wrestlers, training them and teaching them, and then you just snatch them out from under me. Well listen to me, Neidhardt, I'm working on an extra special surprise for you, a surprise that you're not gonna be too happy with. Get ready, 'cause this is gonna be a big one."



A—ON— ASSIGNMENT

BY LIZ HUNTER



Rick Morton rakes his fingernails across Grappler I's back as Robert Gibson looks on from the ring apron. Columnist Liz Hunter is among the many females who would like to go out on a date with a member of The Rock 'n' Roll Express.

PRO ATHLETES ARE always going to be the objects of teenage girls' affections. When I was 14, I remember going crazy over Joe Namath, the New York Jets quarterback. In fact, I once even passed up a wrestling card at Madison Square Garden to watch the Jets on Monday Night Football.

Back in 1970, there were the three Pauls: Paul Diamond, Paul DeMarco, and Paul Christy. They were wrestling's heartthrobs; at least they were mine. Today, there are so many young, good-looking men in wrestling that for the "Wrestling's Sexiest Superstars" poll featured in our sister publication *Wrestling Superstars*

we had to leave out about three times as many wrestlers as we included.

The men on this year's ballot include stars like AWA World champion Rick Martel, the winner of the last poll two years ago, NWA World champion Ric Flair, WWF champ Hulk Hogan, North American champion Terry "Magnum T.A." Allen, U.S. champion Rick Steamboat, and Florida state champion Billy Jack. I'm not going to tell you who I would vote for, but I will tell you that he wears a title belt.

Two of the many wrestlers that got excluded from our list, for no other reason than to keep the ballot down to a reasonable size,

were Rick Morton and Robert Gibson, the Mid-South tag team champions. "The Rock 'n' Roll Express" were not neglected by the Mid-South promoters, however, who are running a "Superdate at the Superdome" contest. By the time you read this column, two lucky female fans will have won a special evening with Morton and Gibson that includes transportation to New Orleans from their home, dinner with the two stars, limousine service, and front row seats for the Superdome wrestling extravaganza, a card topped, appropriately, by The Rock 'n' Roll Express.

Entrants were required to write
(Continued on page 46)

If you wish to contribute to Shocket's mailbag, send your letters to:

TOP ROPE
Box 48
Rockville Centre, NY
11571

OFF THE O ROPE

By Dan Shocket

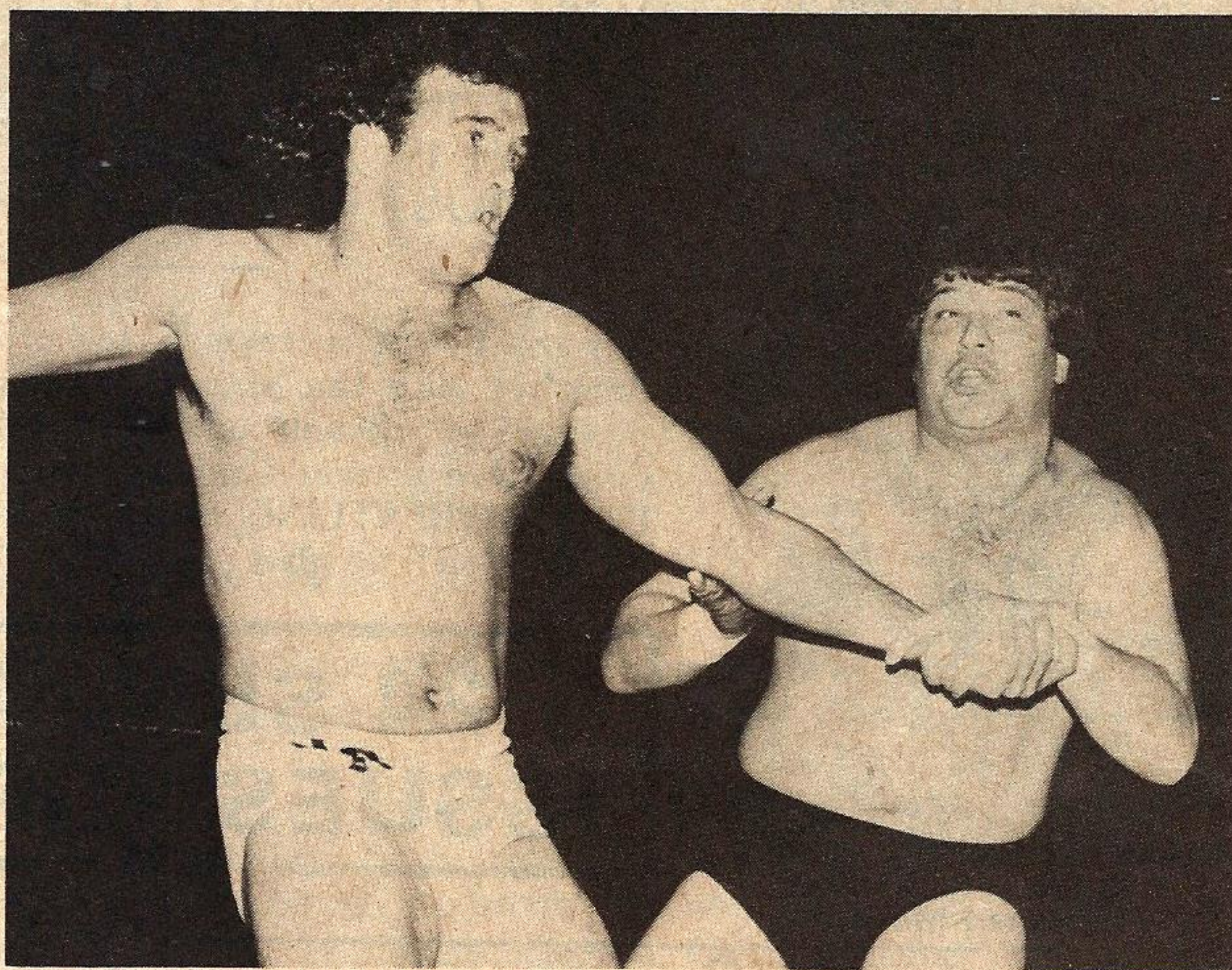
[Editor's Note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the letter writers and Dan Shocket himself. They do not necessarily represent the editorial views of this magazine.]

MORE THAN A few letters have severely castigated me for slighting the WWF title reign of Bob Backlund, an era I don't believe can be slighted enough. My correspondents point out that I gave over a whole column to fans' analyses of Ric Flair's first title reign. These benighted scribblers contend Backlund deserves the same treatment. Though I contend the only treatment Backlund deserves is the place where they handle sewage, I admit the correspondents do have an argument. So to be fair, I invite any and all readers to write letters summing up the six years of degradation known as Bob Backlund's WWF title reign.

And now on to more pleasant topics.

Dear Mr. Shocket,

I am a Ted DiBiase fan and have been for years, but I feel a wrestler like Ted should be able to handle wrestlers like Tommy Rich,



With all that is working against Ted DiBiase, how can anyone blame him for loading up his glove from time to time? Referees will look out for a guy like Johnny Rich (above), but who's going to watch out for Ted DiBiase?

Johnny Rich, and Brad Armstrong without loading his glove or cheating any other way.

Why can't all wrestlers just wrestle and be fair about the way they wrestle? I can remember when Ted wrestled scientifically. He was a far better wrestler then.

PAULINE MAXWELL
Alliance, OH

Dear Ms. Maxwell,

I envy you the life that must be so free from harsh realities that you could ask that question. With the commissioners, officials, referees and cadres of wrestlers against him, do you really expect DiBiase to be wholesome and pure? I'm not saying Ted used a loaded glove, but if
(Continued on page 62)

Every issue, reporters from PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport.

PRESS CONFERENCE

BRAD
ARMSTRONG

The feud between Brad Armstrong and Ted DiBiase has been well documented in this magazine. It's an ugly war whose roots stretch far deeper than the common cause for wrestling feuds: athletic pride and jealousy. DiBiase, a

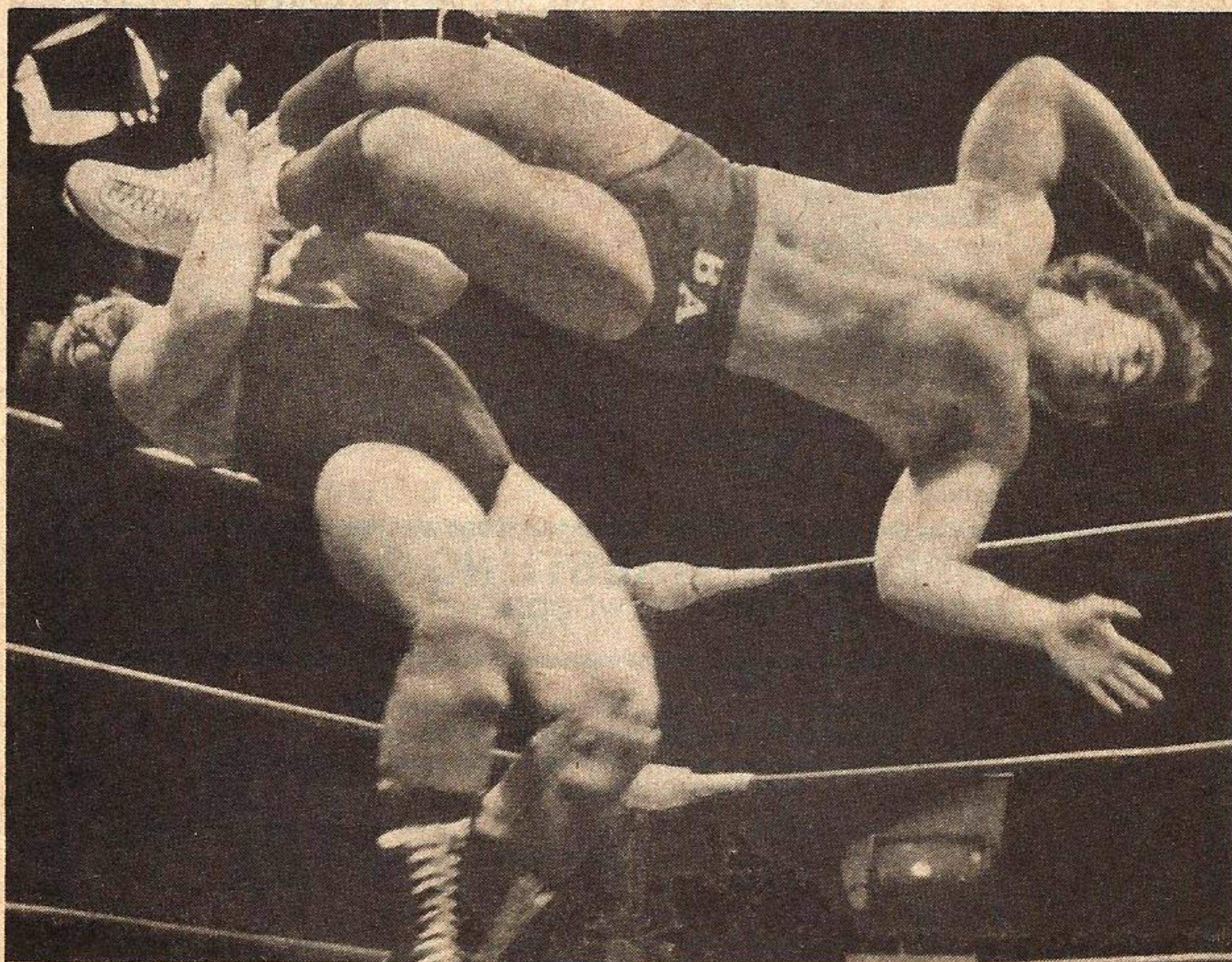
man whom the fans used to honor with their cheers, has taken responsibility for inflicting drastic facial injuries on Brad's father, Bob Armstrong.

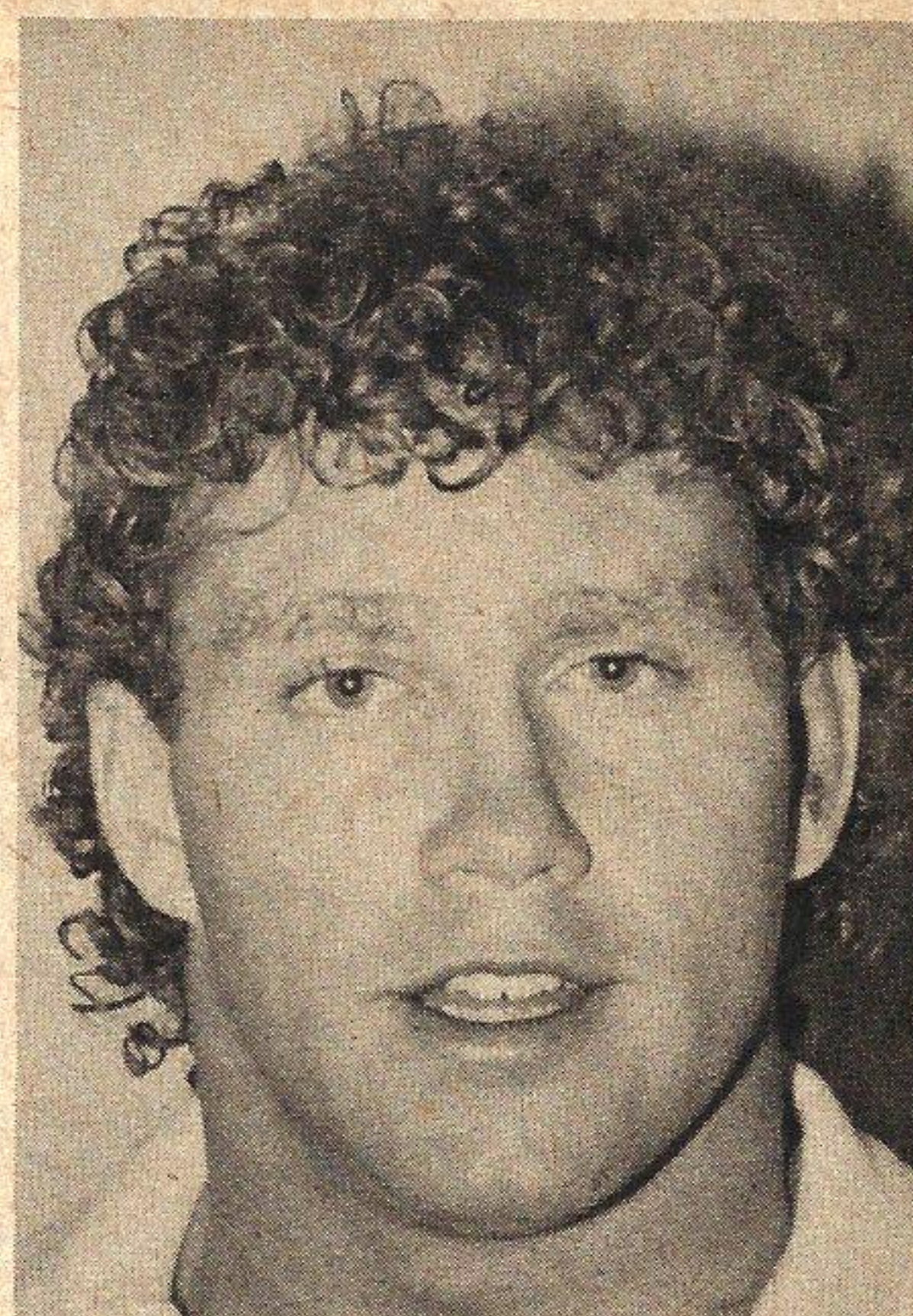
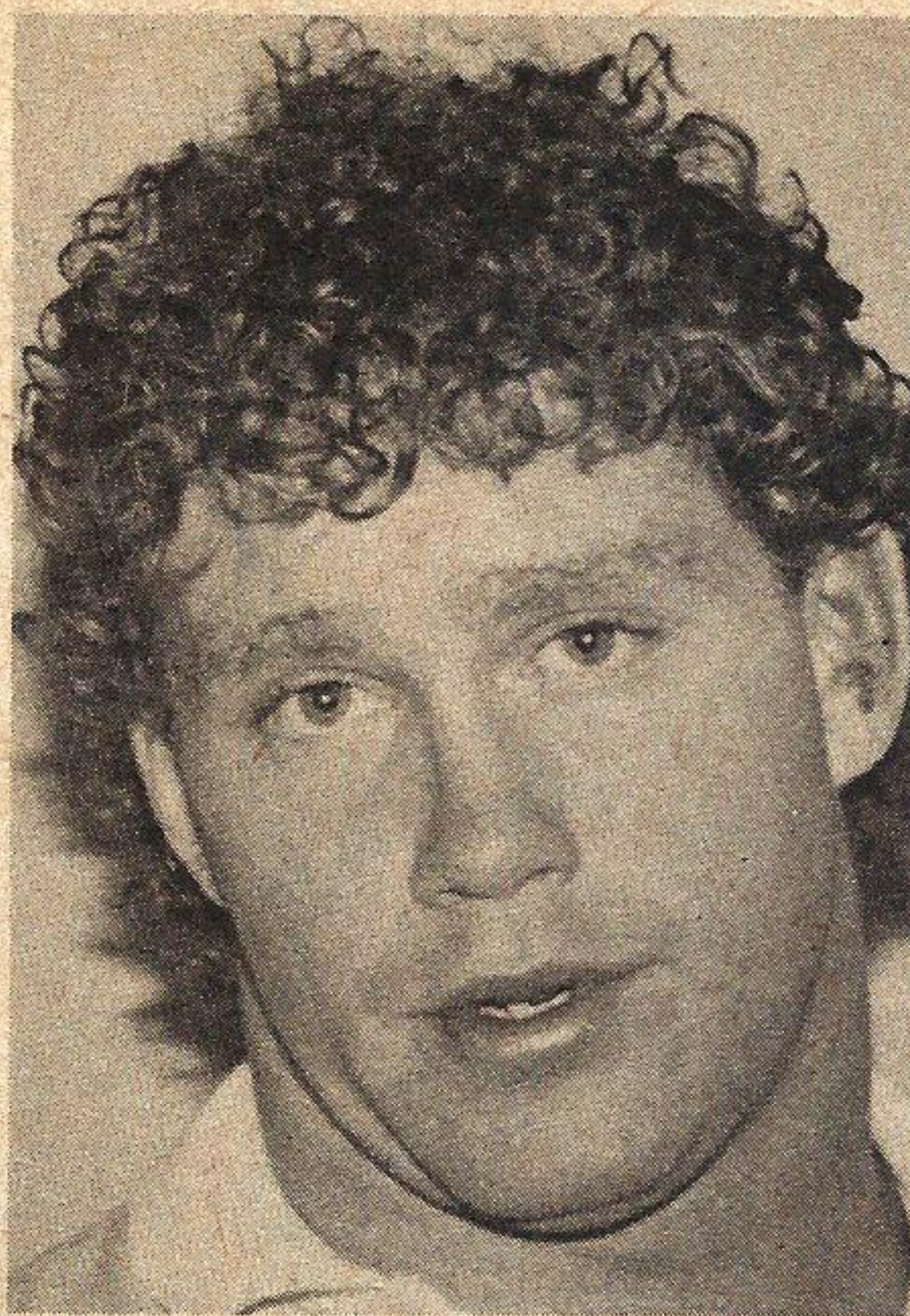
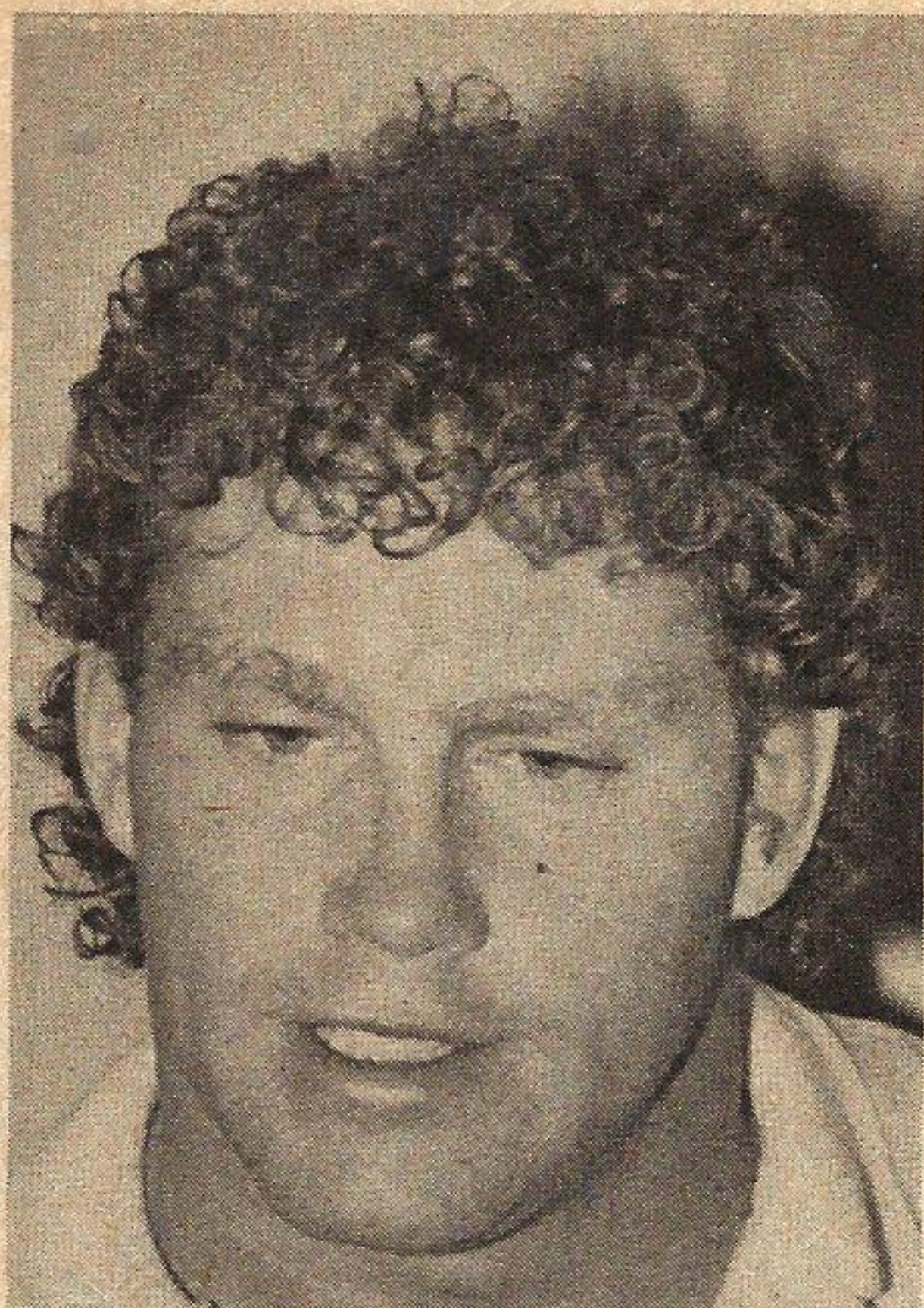
Brad promised that he would repay DiBiase for the ruthless attack,

and got his revenge when he took the National heavyweight belt from DiBiase while disguised as the masked Mr. R. Armstrong wasn't proud of the methods of his revenge, saying afterward, "The rules are important, very important. But there's one thing that's more important: love. I'd kill for [my father]."

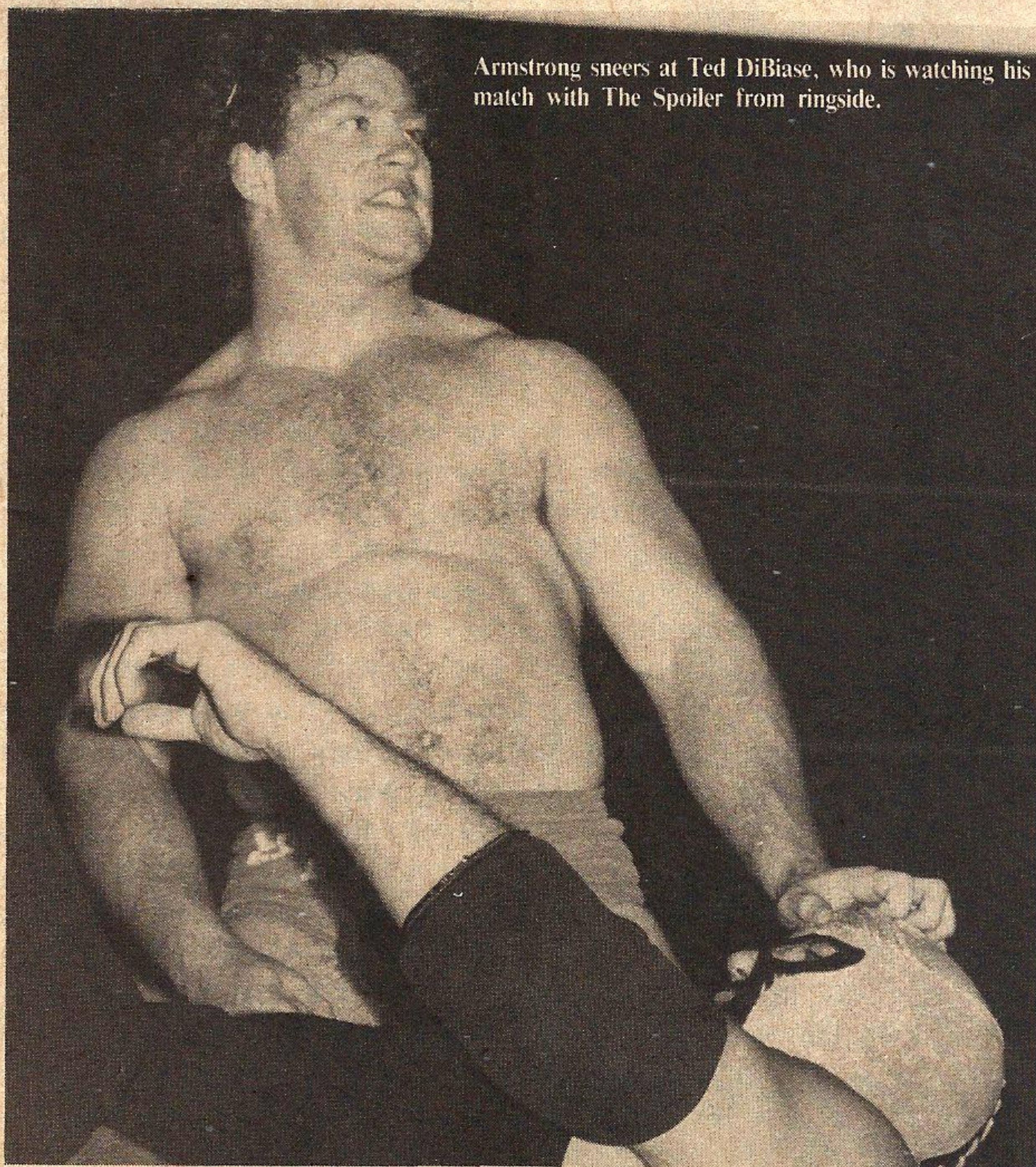
Although Armstrong lost the belt to the Paul Ellering-managed Spoiler, he soon reclaimed the belt in front of a hometown crowd at Marietta, Georgia's Cobb County Civic Center. After the match, while Brad celebrated with his father, DiBiase ran into the ring and, with The Spoiler and Ellering, attacked both men. Spoiler clamped his clawhold on Bob's healing facial injuries, inflicting even more damage.

Managing Editor Stu Saks, Associate Editor Craig Peters, and Assistant Editor Rich Countis spoke to Brad after a recent title defense in Cleveland.





"I'll wrestle either Spoiler or DiBiase anywhere, in any city, in any arena. You can't do what they did to an Armstrong and get away with it."



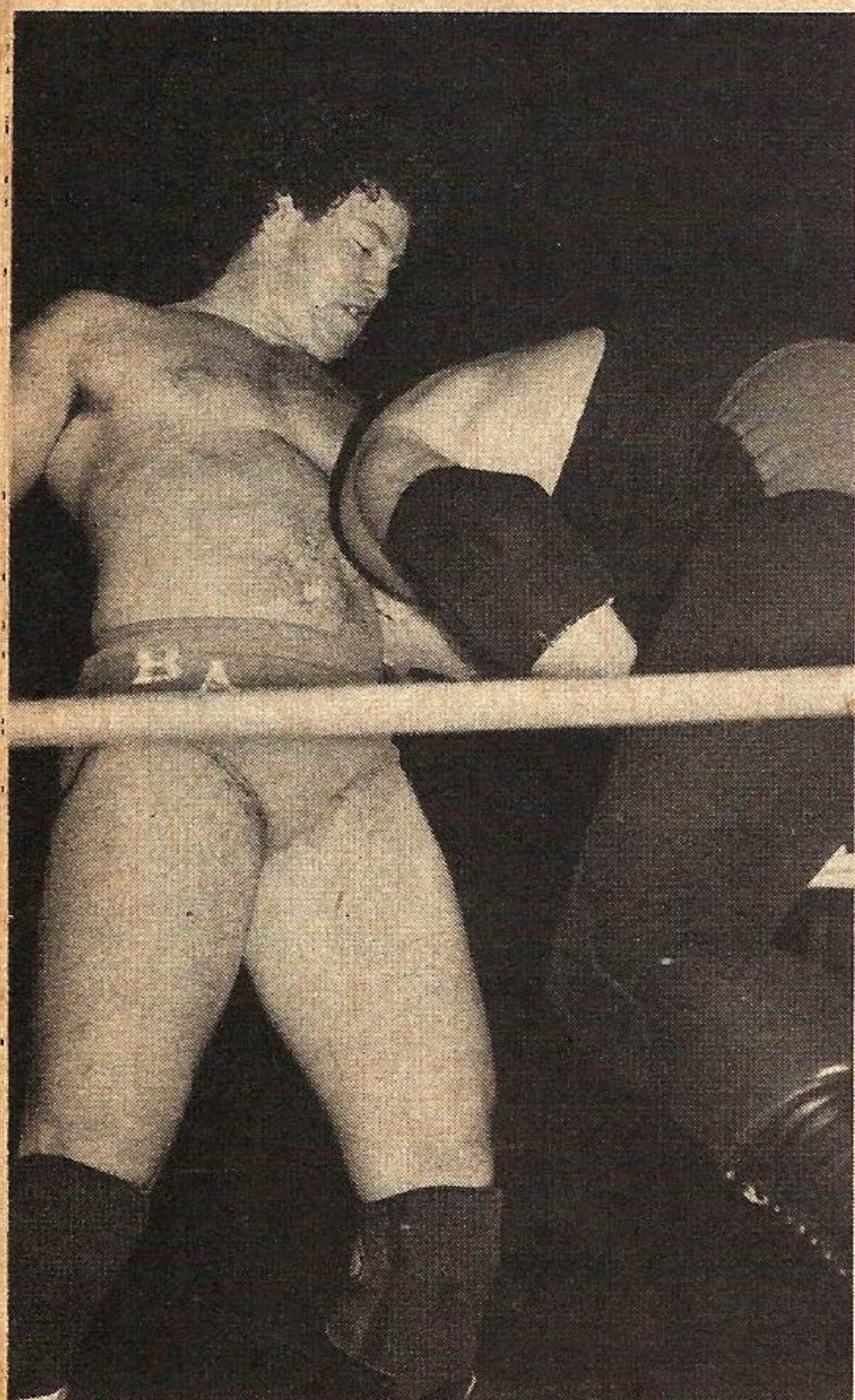
Armstrong sneers at Ted DiBiase, who is watching his match with The Spoiler from ringside.

STU SAKS: The last time we spoke, Brad, you had just beaten DiBiase for the National title. You've lost the title and regained it since then. Is being the champ any easier the second time around?

BRAD ARMSTRONG: Well, Stu, to tell you the truth, it's tougher now, a lot tougher. It seems like everyone wants a piece of me. On top of that, I have DiBiase and The Spoiler chasing me all over the place: in Georgia, on tour here in Ohio, Michigan, West Virginia, New Jersey, and Maryland. There's no let up.

CRAIG PETERS: Do you think the feud with DiBiase will adversely affect your title reign?

BA: You know, I'm very proud to be the National champion, and I do revere this championship belt, but I can't just turn my back on what that scumbucket Ted DiBiase did to my father. I can't let him off the hook for breaking my father's face. Jeez, he broke his face! If I let him get away with that, I wouldn't be able to live with myself. Getting



DiBiase back for what he did is more important than the National title. It's a case of family vs. career. Family will always come first. Anyway, DiBiase wants the title, and I want him, so it all works out.

RICH COUNTIS: What's the status of your father's recovery?

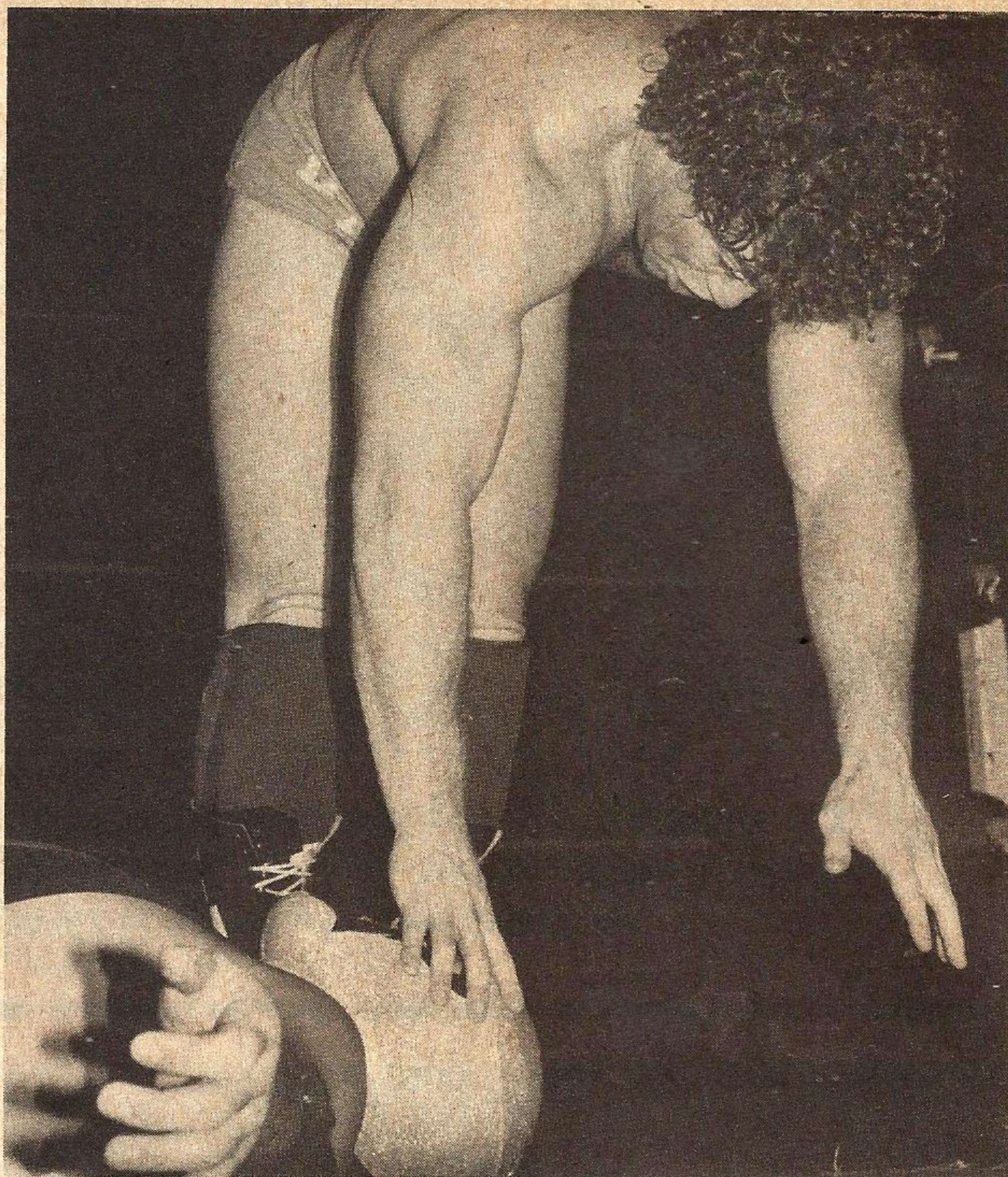
BA: Right now, he's still seeing a plastic surgeon. Like I told Stu during our last interview, he's had both cheekbones replaced.

SS: They removed one of his ribs to replace the cheekbones, right?

BA: That's right. He has one more operation to go through, and then all he has to do is heal properly, with no interruptions. This time, he's not going near a wrestling ring. I couldn't believe what happened in Marietta.

CP: Didn't you consider the possibility that The Spoiler and DiBiase might be planning to attack your father?

BA: That was shameful! I'm almost embarrassed to say that I'm in the same line of work as those two, and Paul Ellering. I never thought about it. I was too happy about winning the title back to think



Armstrong's National title victory over The Spoiler was an extremely costly one. As Brad and his father, Bob, celebrated in the ring, Spoiler and DiBiase violently attacked the pair. Bob, who was recovering from a previous DiBiase assault, was again badly injured.

about something so terrible.

SS: You've got The Spoiler and DiBiase after you ...

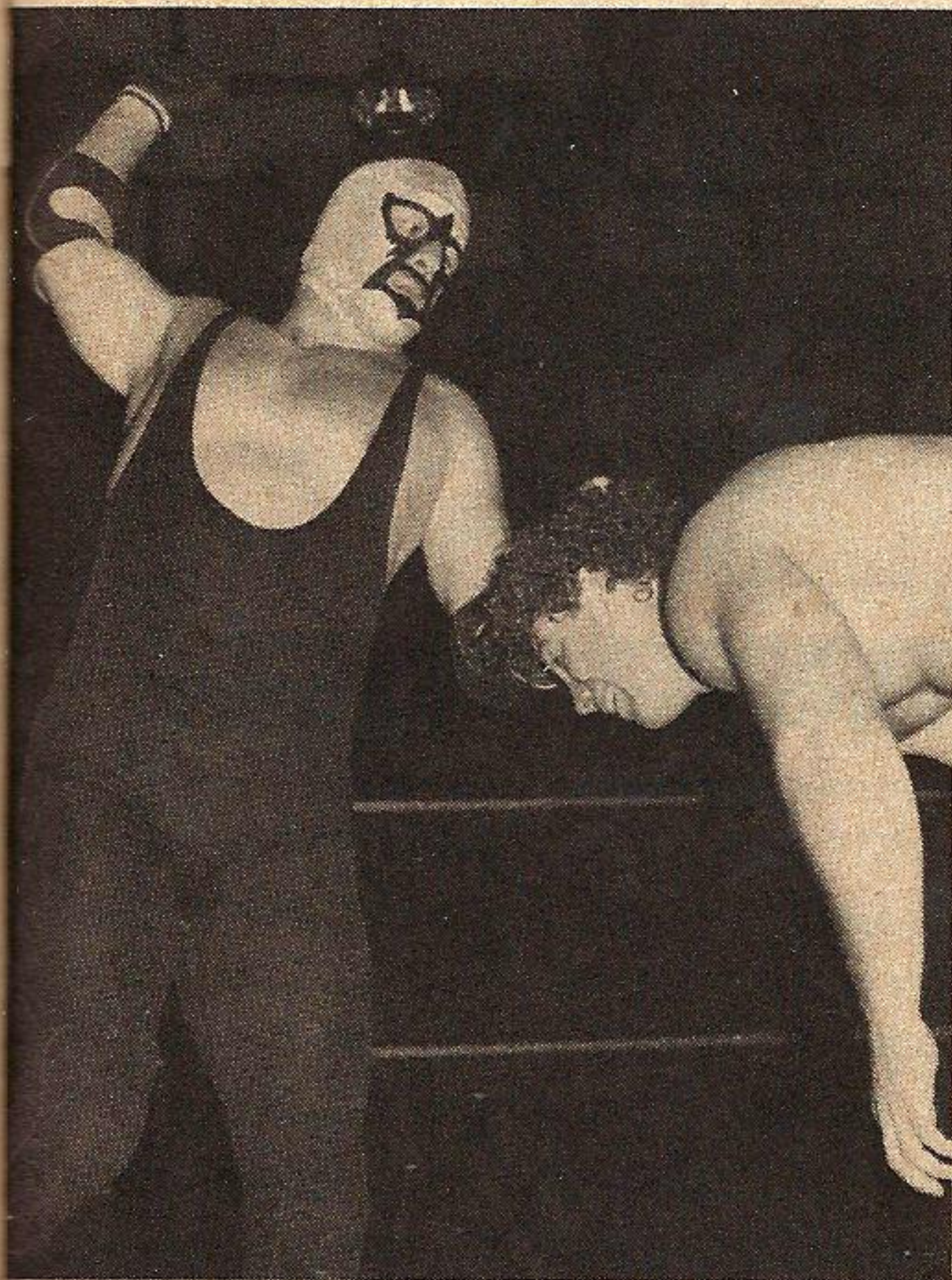
BA: I think it's more like we're after each other. I've said it on TV, and I'll say it every time I'm asked: I'll wrestle either Spoiler or DiBiase anywhere, in any city, in any arena. Or, if they like it better this way, I'll fight them in any alley or in any parking lot they want. All I want is a piece of them. You can't do what they did to an Armstrong and get away with it.

RC: I think Stu was about to ask about the other worthy challengers for your title. There are a lot of good men in the Georgia area waiting for a title shot. How about Jake Roberts, or Tommy Rogers, or Tim Horner, or Billy Jack?

BA: First, let me apologize to you

Stu for cutting you off like that. I'm just getting real hyped up about this whole situation. I've been flying off the handle at everyone. As far as the other challengers go, I know they're there. I've wrestled Roberts a few times now, and I know that he's tough. You can see how much trouble Ronnie Garvin's having with him. Rogers and Horner are great wrestlers. They're like me. They're young, fast, talented. I would welcome a match against either of them. It would be a relief to wrestle in a purely scientific match. As far as Billy Jack goes, I've only seen him wrestle a few times, and I've read about him in your magazines. He's a powerful guy. I have a lot of respect for him. You can tell just by his body that he has a lot of discipline. You

don't build a body like that without it. There's also some talk that Barry Windham's planning to sign for some matches in the Georgia area. Barry and I became good friends when I was wrestling in Florida a while back, and I know



that he would be a great challenger. Hopefully, these matches will be signed. I'd like to see it, and I know the fans would enjoy them. CP: Does it help to have the fans behind you when you're in the ring against DiBiase or The Spoiler? BA: Oh, definitely. It's good to know that you've got some support. The ring can be a real lonely place, you know? When you got the people behind you, though, it's almost like you're not there alone. SS: Do you see any end in sight with this feud between you, The Spoiler, and DiBiase? BA: Yeah, I see an end. The end will be when I've gotten them back for everything they've done to the Armstrongs. Everything. Not only the physical injuries, but for all the mental anguish we've gone through, all the worrying, and all the days my dad spent in the hospital. I'll do it alone, or I'll do it with help, but I'll get the job done. I'll sacrifice my health and my title. Family is number one. Right now, nothing else matters. □

Wrestling 84

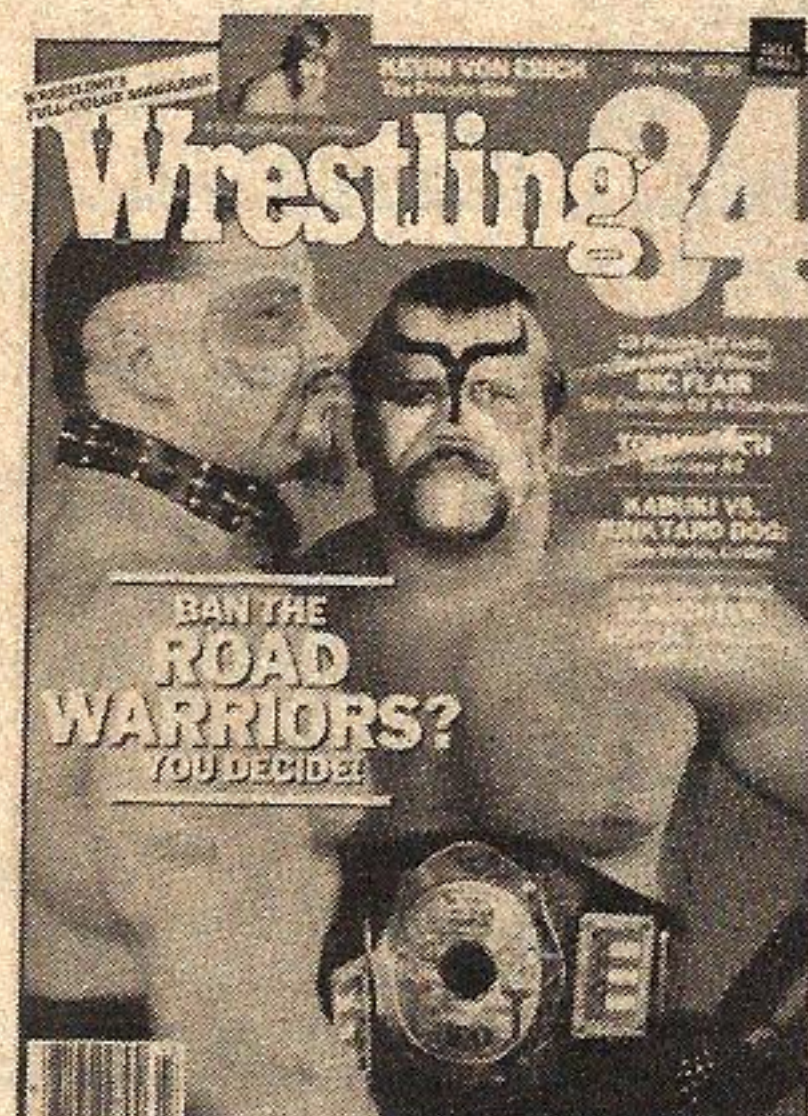
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The magazine that explodes with color!

Wrestling 84

The Fall issue is now on sale at your local newsstand!

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- Interview 84 with Tommy "Wildfire" Rich
- Full-color features on Sunshine & Chris Adams, The Great Kabuki & Junkyard Dog, and Ric Flair
- A colorful look at four WWF superstars: Sgt. Slaughter, Jimmy Snuka, Hulk Hogan, and Tito Santana
- Mr. Wrestling II in the "Crossfire"
- An inside look at "The Private Side" of Kevin Von Erich
- A scouting report on Rick Martel
- Official ratings in 14 categories



Wrestling 84

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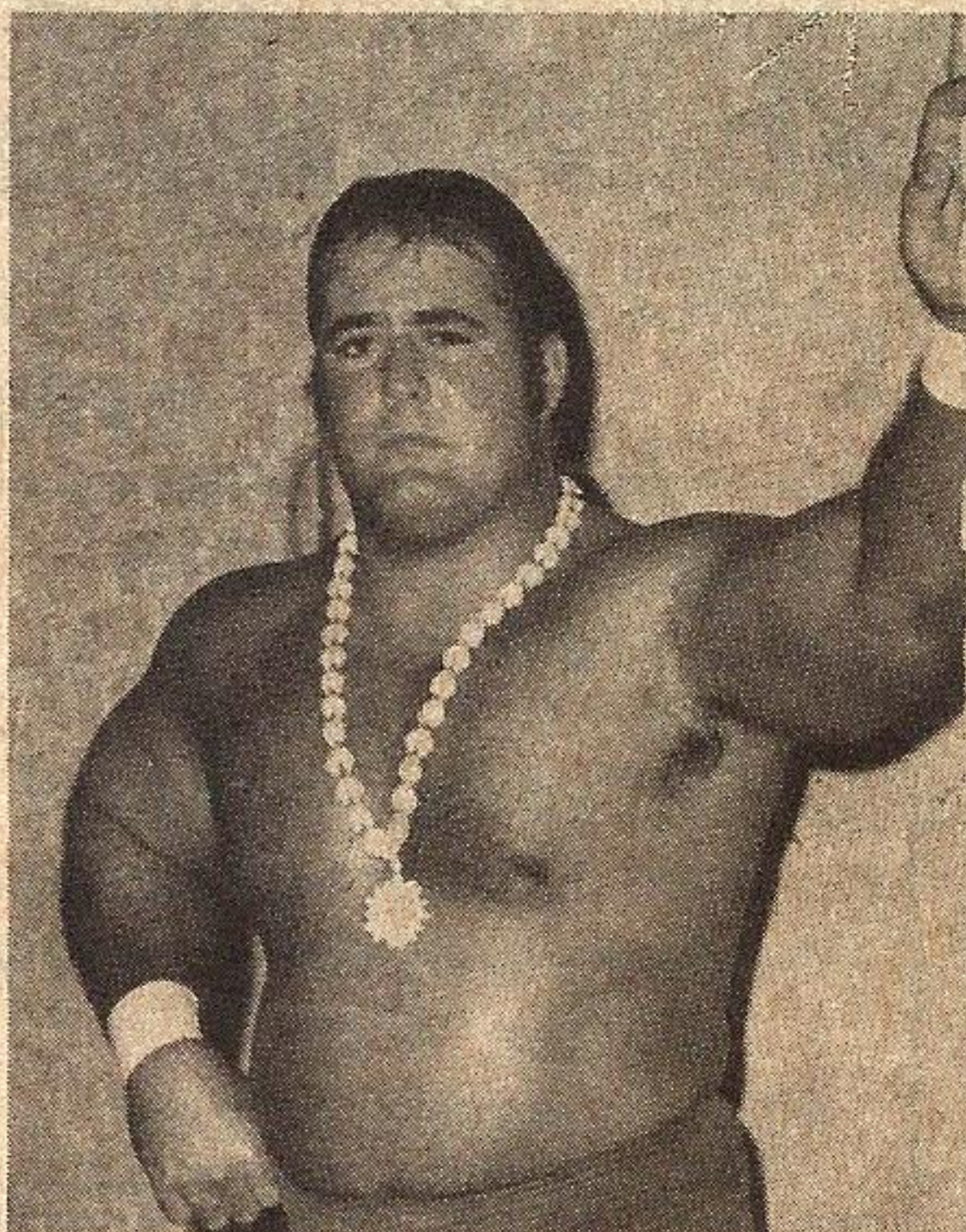
With CRAIG PETERS

THE PWI-T-SHIRT CONTEST

Maybe I'm going to have to start coming up with trivia questions instead of printing photos of presumably unidentifiable wrestlers. It seems that everyone is coming up with the correct answers these days.

Actually, I thought I'd try to throw you a curve last issue by asking readers to identify where a particular match (Don Kernodle vs. boxer Lee Canalito) was shown, instead of having to identify a specific wrestler.

Well, almost everyone came up with the right answer: The



??????????

match was shown in the Sylvester Stallone film *Paradise Alley*. Ed Burgoyne of Albany, New York, was lucky enough to have his correct entry chosen from a box that was, I'm sad to say, jam-packed with mail. Hopefully, this month's contest will be a little tougher.

All you've got to do is identify the wrestler in the accompanying photo. No hints.

Mail your answer, along with your T-shirt size (small, medium, large, or extra large), to: In Focus/PWI, Box 48, Rockville Centre, New York 11571.

THEY LOOK LIKE THEY'D MAKE A GREAT TAG TEAM!

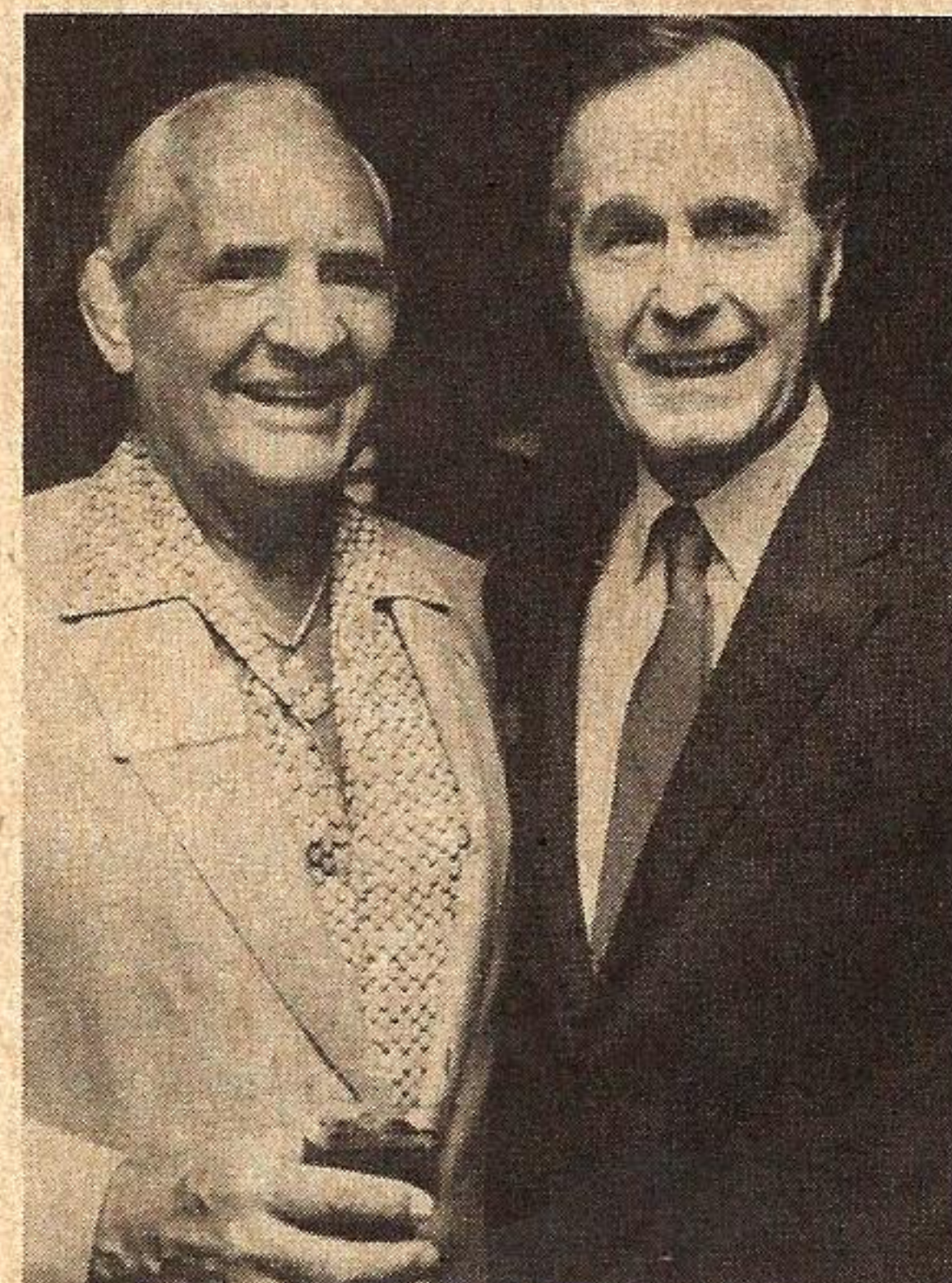
Houston promoter Paul Boesch was recently the guest of Vice President George Bush at a private party marking the occasion of the Houston Astros' 1984 opening game at the Astrodome. (The vice president threw out the first ball at the game.)

"I was on a tour of New Zealand when I got a phone call telling me about the invitation," Boesch said. "You sure better believe that there was no hesitation when I cut my trip short and rushed back to Houston!"

"The vice president is a true

sports fan," Boesch said, "and best of all, from my own point of view, he's a wrestling fan as well!"

Coincidentally, Mr. Bush was little league coach for the team on which Wahoo McDaniel played when they lived in Odessa, Texas. He was a fan of Wahoo's when he played professional football, and has followed his athletic career into professional wrestling. He is also a good friend of Ernie Ladd's, and follows Ladd's career closely to this day.



Boesch & Bush

HEEEEEEEERE'S JERRY!

Wrestling fans in Memphis, Tennessee, have been tuning in to WMC-TV Channel 5 at 11 a.m. on Sundays for a unique program called *The Jerry Lawler Show*. This program provides an overview of the entire sports world with, of course, an emphasis on professional wrestling.

"It's important that we cover all sports, from wrestling to basketball to football to baseball to professional karate," Lawler explains. "Our audience becomes that much larger, the interest in all sports increases, and maybe even we'll win over a few more fans to wrestling!"

As far as the wrestling portion of the program is concerned, the best explanation might be that *The Jerry Lawler Show* is a video wrestling magazine.

"We have interviews with the top stars in the Mid-Southern



Jerry Lawler

area," Lawler says, "personality profiles, and spotlight matches. We even have a segment on occasion that brings together two antagonists via satellite hook-up—that's one portion of the

show that's created a few fireworks over the weeks!"

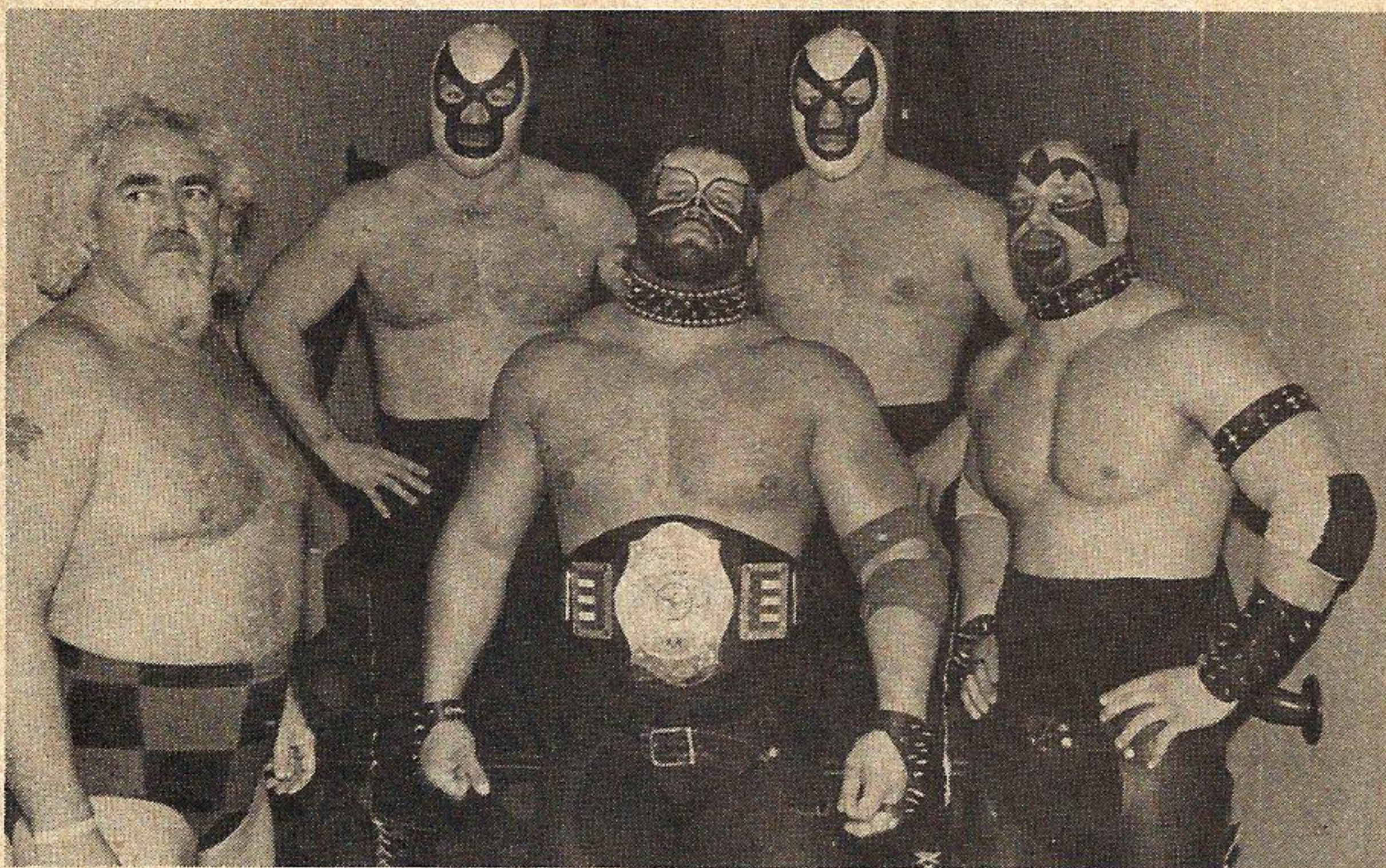
Lawler reports that response to *The Jerry Lawler Show* has been excellent and that station executives are very pleased.

IS THE LEGION OF DOOM EXPANDING?

Last month, this column asked the rhetorical question, "Is the Legion of Doom crumbling?" Well, it appears that what I had anticipated has not come to pass . . . yet. I wrote about some friction between Jake "The Snake" Roberts and The Road Warriors. That friction has not affected The Legion in any major way over the last month, but I think it may in the near future. Let's keep an eye on that situation.

Meanwhile, it appears as if The Legion of Doom may be expanding to include some of the more vicious rulebreakers in the Kansas City area such as Crazy Luke Graham and The Masked Grapplers.

"I am not about to reveal to you any plans for the future of The Legion of Doom," Ellering said when I contacted him. "But



The Road Warriors with Luke Graham & The Grapplers

I will say that I am always looking for ways in which to expand and strengthen the Legion, and I am open to any and all intelligent suggestions on how to do that."

When contacted by *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, Crazy Luke Gra-

ham denied any connection with Ellering, or knowledge of any negotiations with The Legion of Doom. I tried to call the The Masked Grapplers, but couldn't locate them. Does anyone know the area code for "Parts Unknown?" □

The New AWA Champion Rates His Challengers

RICK MARTEL:

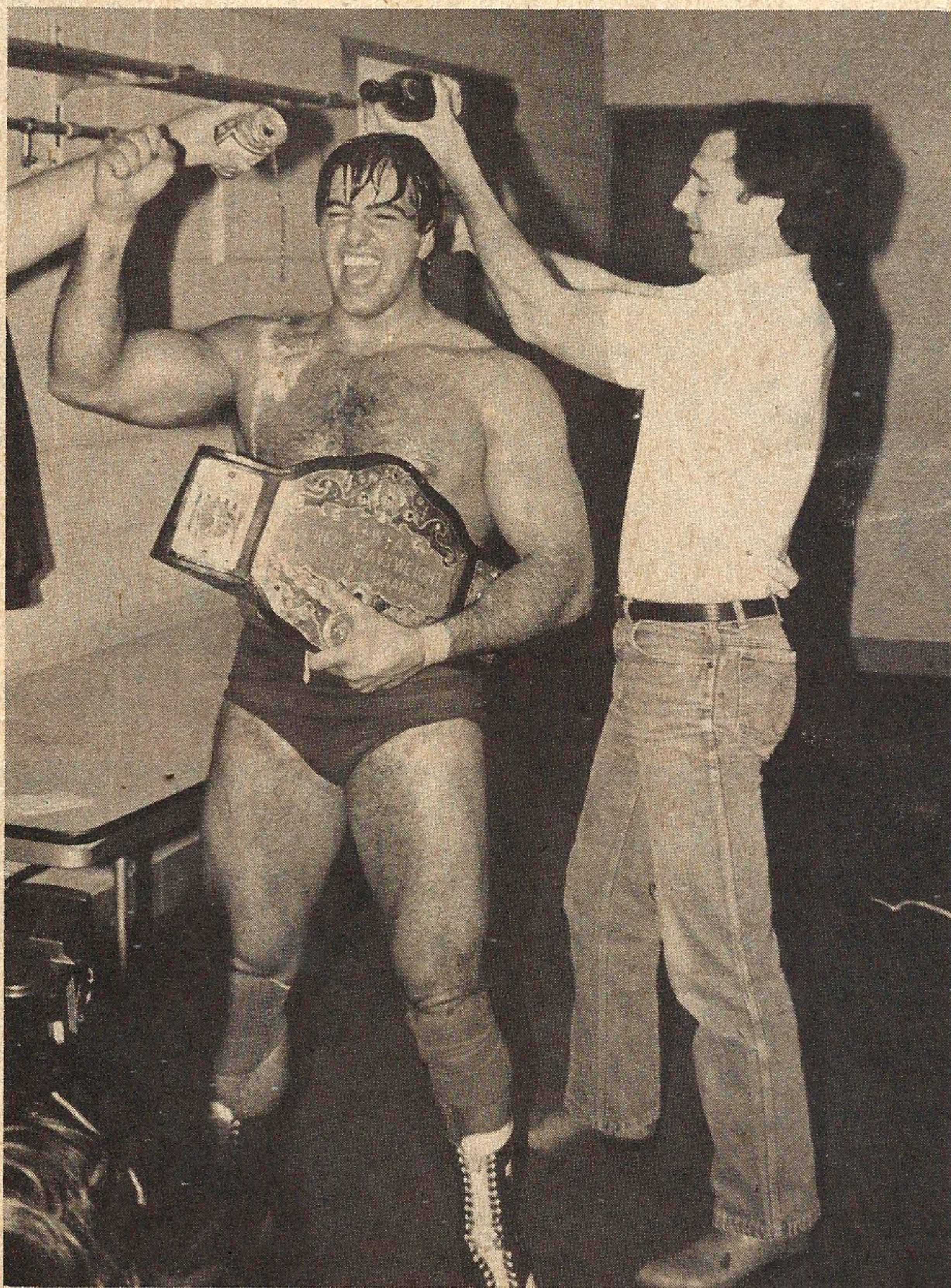
"I'VE NEVER HAD IT SO TOUGH!"

Rick Martel has consistently been a top contender for the AWA World title since his arrival in that area nearly two years ago. He recently realized his championship dream by defeating Jumbo Tsuruta for the AWA belt. Now Martel is a target for some of the top names in the sport, and the young Canadian is beginning to truly understand the rigors of being champion

IN THE FIRST week of June, I had the pleasure of traveling to Montreal to visit with Rick Martel. We spent a lot of time in the photo studio, and Rick was proud and honored to pose with the AWA World belt around his waist.

During those studio sessions, Rick and I got to talking about the differences between being a contender for a title and being the holder of that title. It's a topic I've discussed countless times before with countless other champions, and I'm always fascinated to discover that each wrestler has his own unique thoughts on the subject.

In Martel's case, the difference of being challenger and champion was one of the degree of intensity with which he must wrestle. He realizes that



Rick Martel celebrates his title victory over Jumbo Tsuruta in Minneapolis with Greg Gagne and several of his other close friends (out of picture).

Photos by Bill Apter

he has to wrestle much harder now than ever before. He has to wrestle harder to maintain his hold on the World title, and he has to wrestle harder to bring the kind of character to his title reign that he would like the belt, and his name, to be associated with. You can bet that Rick Martel won't be disqualifying himself to keep his title!

From speaking about the championship in general terms, Martel shifted to speaking about various top contenders in very specific terms. I placed our discussions on tape, and what follows

Nick Bockwinkel: "For all the criticism that was aimed at Bockwinkel during his title reign, it can't be forgotten that he is one of the most intelligent men in the sport. Right now he's the number one contender, and I've already wrestled him a couple of times. He's dangerous. Very dangerous. When he was champion, he could simply disqualify himself to keep the title. But now that he's no longer champion, his entire wrestling style has changed, just as my own style is in the process of changing. And the most dangerous thing about Bockwinkel is that it's impossible to tell what his style is changing into. When I wrestle Bockwinkel, I'm very, very careful about trying to anticipate what's coming next. One false move on my part will cost me the title—Bockwinkel's not the type of wrestler who gives you a second chance."

Blackjack Lanza: "Lanza is a big man, and he's got experience to spare. What would make him a difficult opponent is the fact that he's willing to take five or six blows in order to get in one of his own. He's an incredibly tough man; when he *does* get in that one blow, it has the same effect as those five or six from someone else! Lanza is also extremely dangerous with his claw-hold, but I like to think that if we ever stepped into the ring together, my speed and agility would enable me to outmaneuver him and escape the claw."

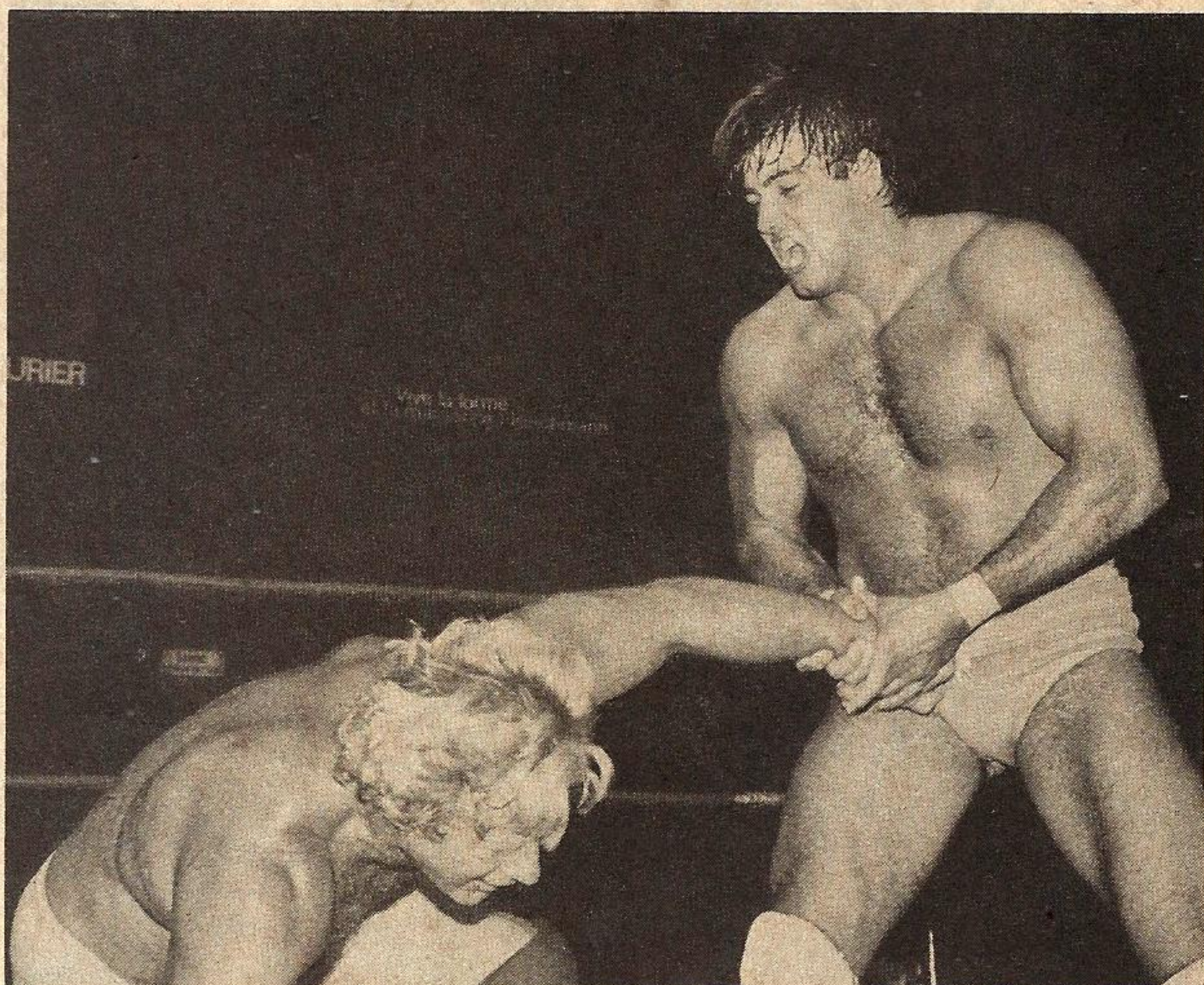
are selected comments transcribed from larger discussions about the five top contenders to his AWA title: Nick Bockwinkel, Blackjack Lanza, Jumbo Tsuruta, Bruiser Brody, and Jerry Lawler. Not only are these men the top five athletes in the AWA, but they are among the very best athletes in all of professional wrestling.

"The wrestling talent in the AWA right now is the cream of the crop as far as the entire sport is concerned," Martel said. "The level of expertise in the AWA has never been greater, and that's something I have to contend

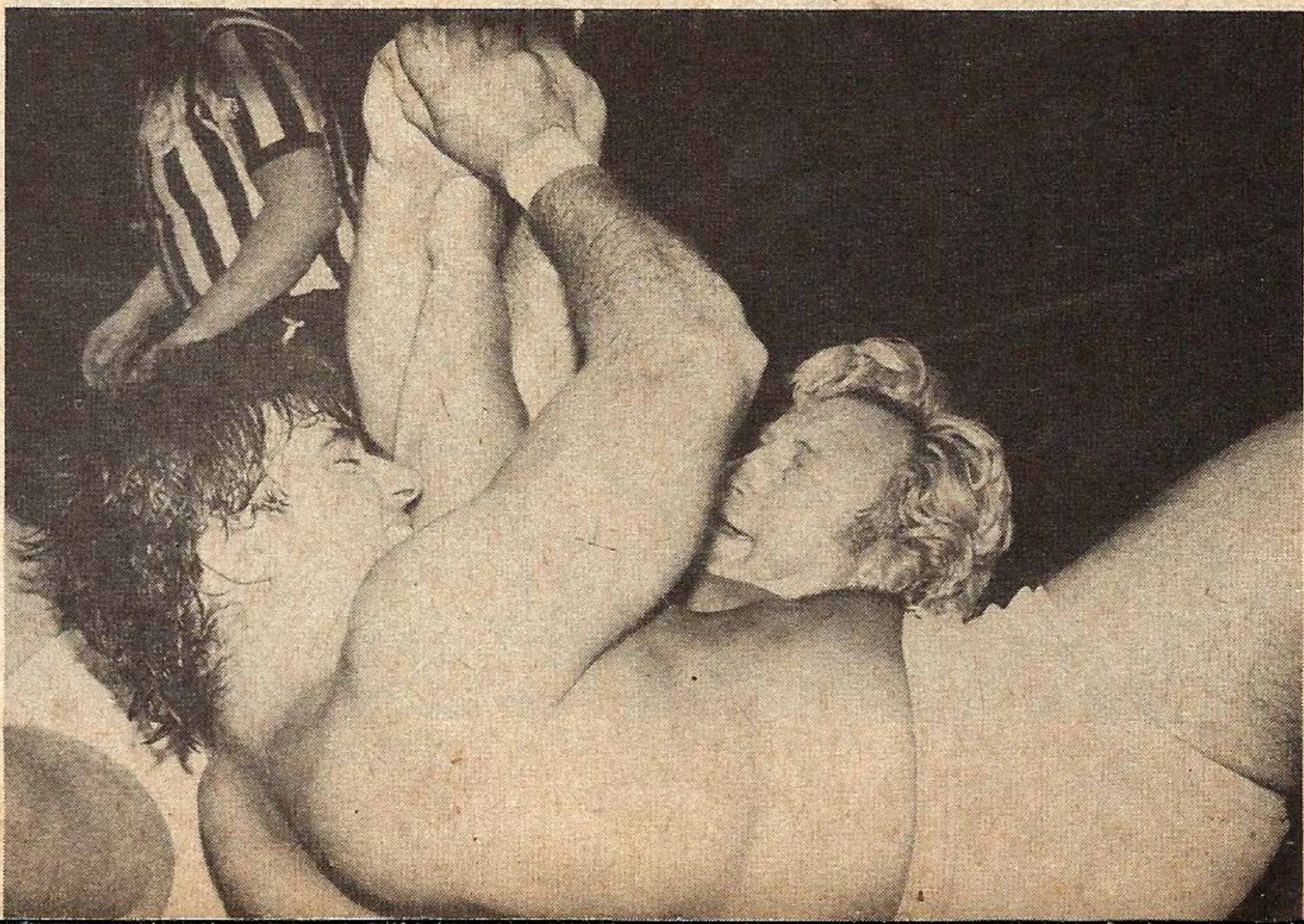
with as champion. I've held regional singles titles before, and I've had the WWF tag team title twice, but those championships are nothing compared to this. As far as I'm concerned, I've never had it so tough."

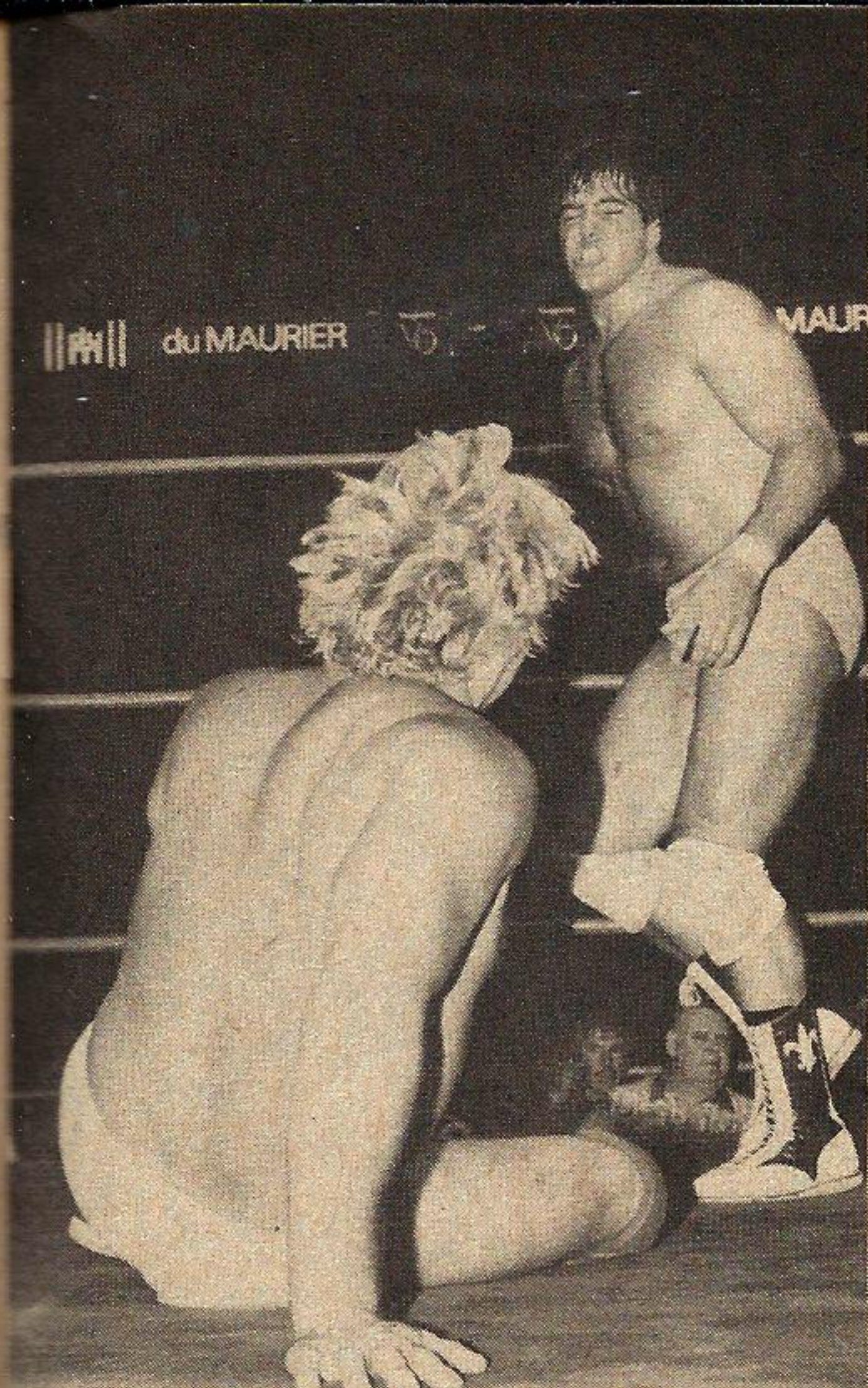
I'm sure you'll find the following quotes enlightening reading, for they reveal a segment of Martel's personality that could not possibly have been revealed until his ascension to the AWA throne. Indeed, they provide a rare glimpse into two personalities: Martel the champion, and Martel the man.

—Bill Apter



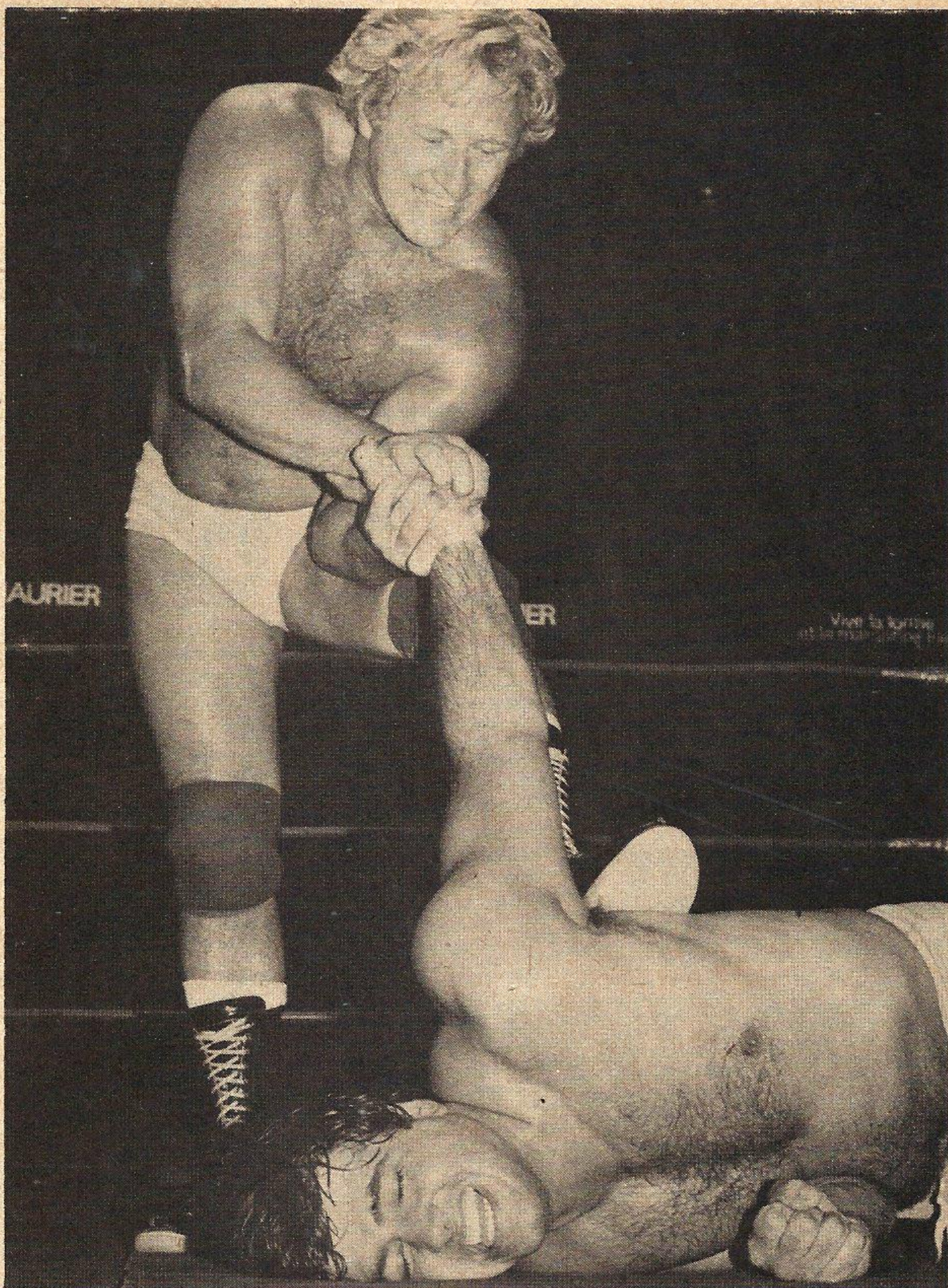
Rick Martel's first match as AWA World champion was against Nick Bockwinkel. Martel twists Bockwinkel's left arm, lowering the former AWA champion to his knees in agony (above). After this test of strength (below), Bockwinkel's shoulders would be on the canvas.





Jumbo Tsuruta: "Well, this is the man, isn't it? The *former* champion, the man I defeated for the title. What can I say? I've got nothing but respect for Tsuruta's wrestling abilities. His scientific knowledge is excellent, and he can maneuver you halfway into a hold before you're even able to figure out what he's doing and devise a counter for it. His knowledge of the Lou Thesz-style backdrop makes him all the more dangerous. He's the kind of opponent who keeps you at top speed both mentally and physically, and if you can't keep up an incredible level of endurance in both of those areas, he's going to pin you. He may be considered the number three contender to my title, but I would have to rate him my number one threat."

Bruiser Brody: "A wildman. Brody has got unbelievable speed, agility, and raw energy. He's got scientific knowledge and he can brawl like mad. He knows how to use the ropes, and his aerial skills are superb. His stamina is excellent as well. In many respects, Brody is the all-round perfect wrestler, but I think he has a tendency to allow himself to get out of control. On the other hand, I pride myself on maintaining a high level of self-control throughout my matches. I think that any



As champion, Bockwinkel would find himself in trouble and intentionally get himself disqualified to keep his belt. Now, when Martel tells him to wrestle (top left), he has no choice. Nick tries to stretch the champion's shoulder out of its socket (above).

match between Brody and myself would revolve around this issue. I would hope that as long as I could incite Brody to allow himself to lose control, my own level of control would be able to capitalize on his inevitable mistakes and capture the match. I would hope. Because if I had to slug it out with Brody in a brawl, I doubt if I would be able to survive for very long."

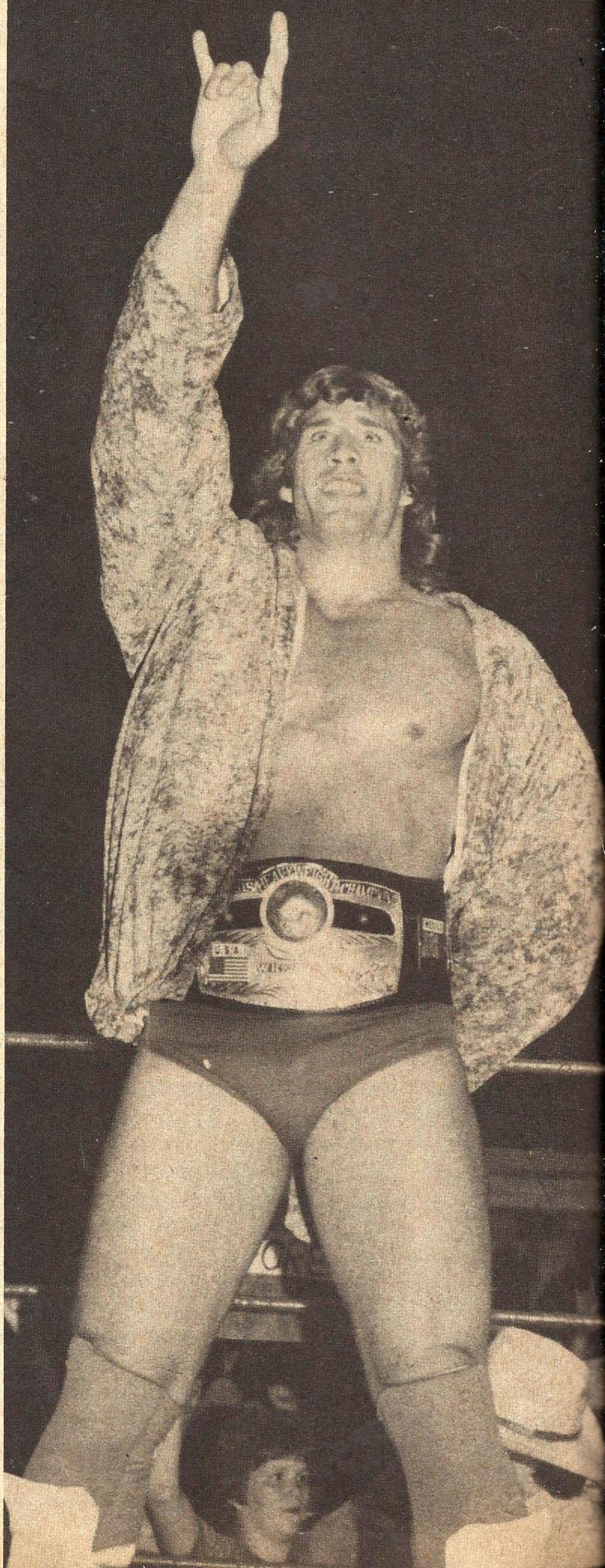
Jerry Lawler: "I watched several of Lawler's matches against Bockwinkel when Nick had the title, and I must say that Lawler was excellent. You know, if Bockwinkel didn't have such a penchant for disqualifying himself, Lawler would have taken the title from

him long ago. Then Tsuruta would have had to wrestle Lawler for the belt, and I'm not sure if he would have been able to defeat him. In many respects, Lawler's style parallels my own, and I believe that a match with him would remain primarily scientific. As far as Lawler is concerned, it would have to be a scientific match—that's his *forte*. Where Brody could destroy a man with his brawling, I think Lawler would get himself destroyed if he tried to wrestle exclusively on that level. And in a purely scientific match, I think I've got the edge on Lawler both in speed and in endurance. I'd like to test that theory; I think a match with Lawler would be a classic." □

**Exclusive
Coverage Of
A Remarkable
NWA Title Reign:**

KERRY VON ERICH'S THREE WEEKS ON TOP OF THE WORLD!

Kerry Von Erich's dream came true when he pinned Ric Flair's shoulders to the mat and captured the NWA World title. In that moment of ecstasy, however, he couldn't have imagined the whirlwind of activity that would immediately follow—nor could he have imagined that the belt would be back around Flair's waist less than three weeks later!



THE SOUND OF 43,517 fans screaming in ecstasy was deafening. And the emotions that gripped Kerry Von Erich in the center of the ring in Texas Stadium were overwhelming.

Kerry had just defeated Ric Flair for the NWA World title. Most important to Kerry, the match took place on a card of wrestling that was dedicated to the memory of his brother David.

"I hope that I can live up to the responsibilities of the NWA championship," Kerry said in an interview the following day. "This title means a lot to me because it doesn't belong just to me. It belongs to my family, my friends, the 43,000 people who were in Texas Stadium yesterday afternoon, and most of all, it belongs to my brother David. And that's where the meaning for this title reign comes from. I'm devoting my title reign to David. It's his championship as much as it is mine."

The responsibilities of the NWA title would make their demands on Kerry even before he had the chance to rest from the Texas Stadium card, catch his breath, and get used to the idea of being the World champion.

"There's no rest for the World champion," Ric Flair was once quoted as saying. "Either you set your controls at 100 percent and forge ahead full force at all times, or you're going to lose the title. It's that simple."

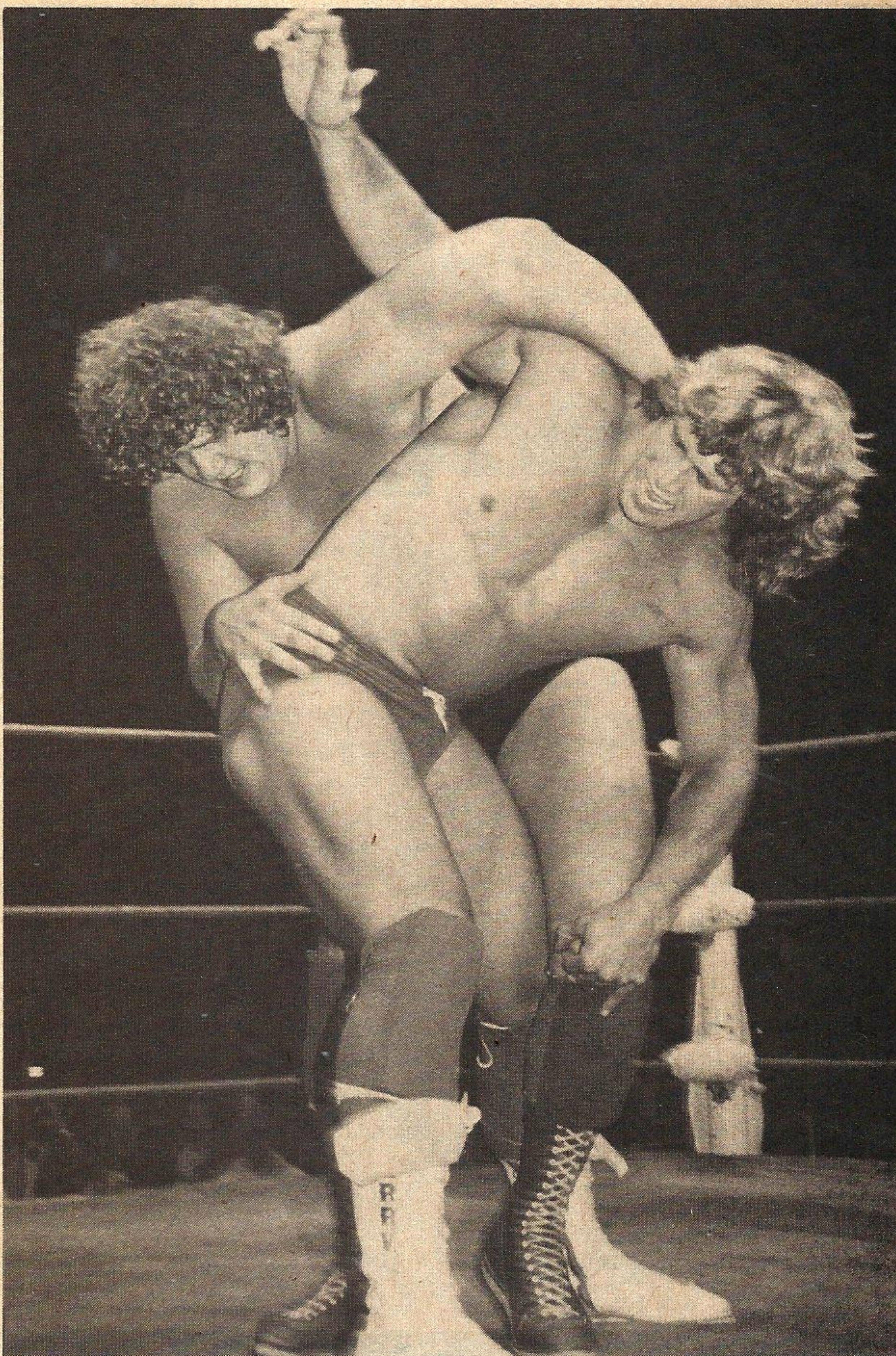
And that difficult.

The Texas Matches

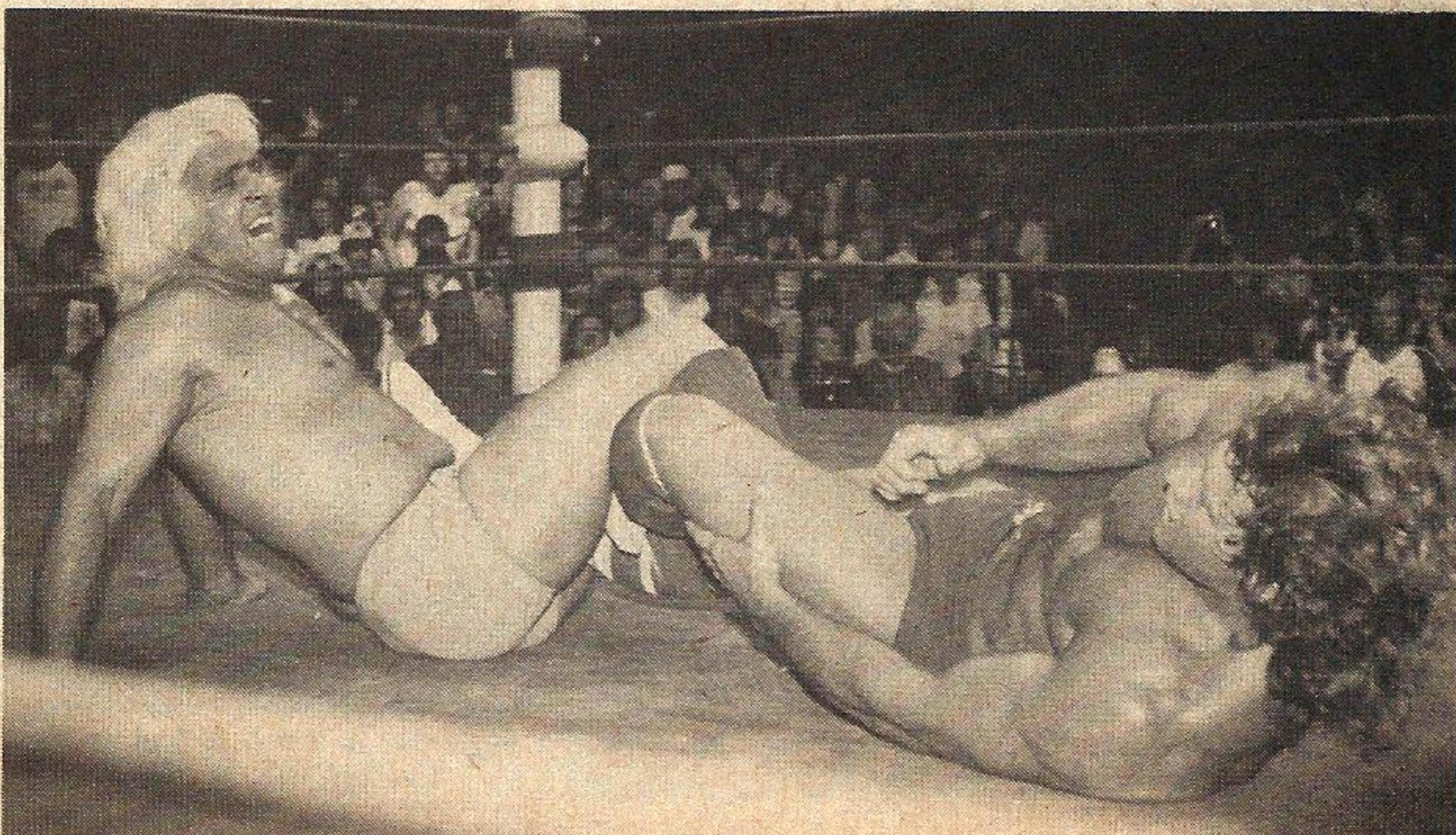
Kerry's first match as NWA champion was a title defense against Freebird Terry Gordy in Fort Worth, Texas.

"In most of the matches involving The Freebirds," notes Senior Editor Bill Apter, who was at ring-side photographing the Von Erich-Gordy match, "Terry Gordy wrestles like a brawler, tries to jam the Oriental spike into his opponent's

Japan match photos by Wally Yamaguchi and Jimmy Suzuki

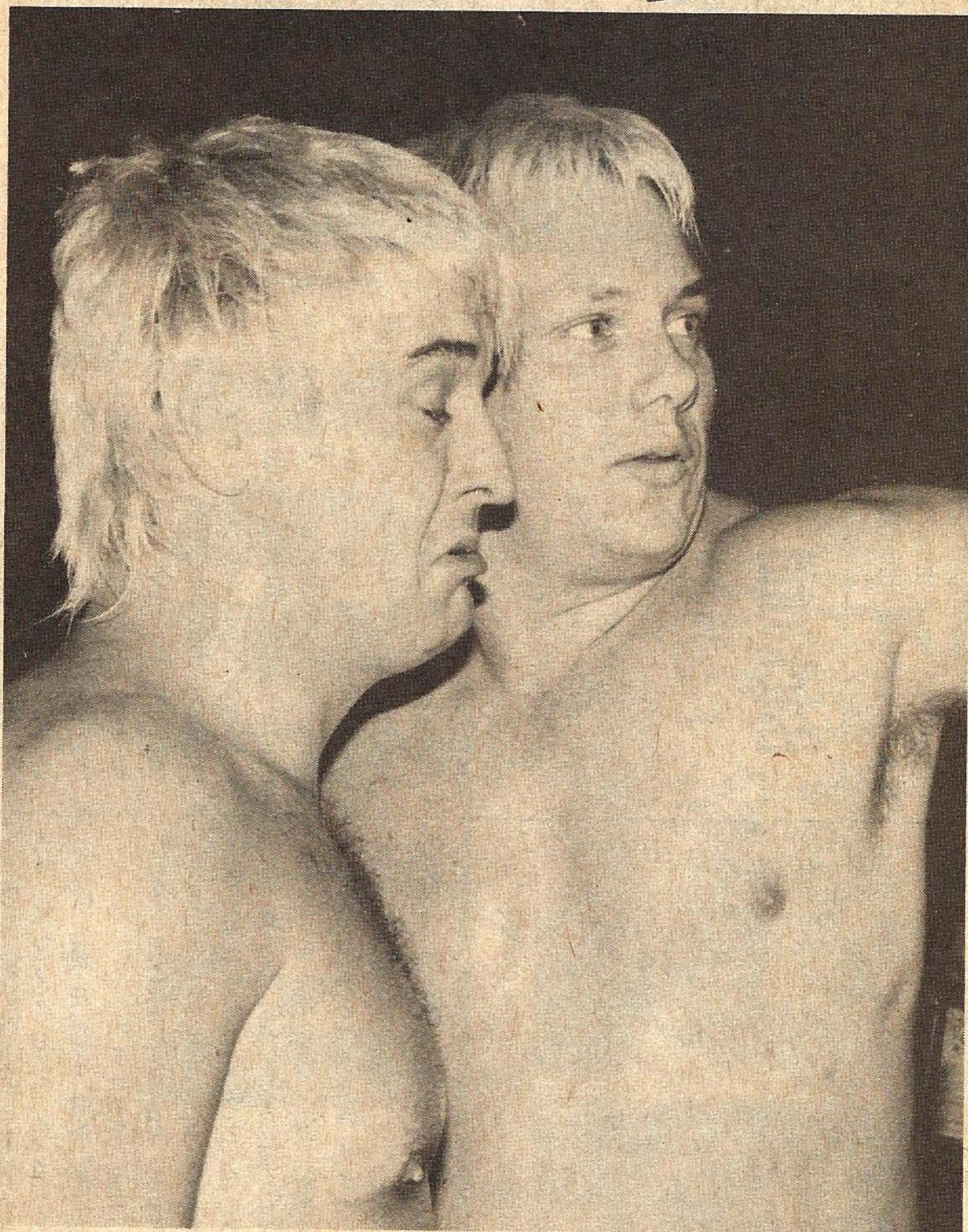


Gordy, applying an abdominal stretch (above), surprised everyone with his scientific approach. Kerry was able to adapt. Ric Flair traps the champion in his figure-four leglock during one of their two non-title matches (below).



LOOKING AT...

Matt Brock:



Ken Timbs tries to console an obviously upset Eric Embry (above). When Embry can concentrate on his wrestling, The Fabulous Blonds' teamwork is devastatingly effective (opposite page) and they are a formidable tag team.

I CAN'T REMEMBER how long it's been since I've been struck with such mixed reactions to any tag team. Usually my opinion comes straight out: The Road Warriors are devastatingly tough, for example, or The Fabulous Ones, Steve Keirn and Stan Lane—dynamic and skilled all the way.

But The Fabulous Blonds, as I said, elicit mixed emotions from me. It's probably because of the fact that they could truly be one of the most successful teams in the sport, if only they could deal with their internal problems. Most of those problems stem from the attitude of Eric Embry.

The Kentucky native showed a lot of talent and determination in his rookie year, and I recall some of those matches in 1982 against opponents like Buzz Sawyer and The Spoiler in which he demonstrated a lot of promise.

But now it seems that it's all that Ken Timbs can do to keep the team together. Embry has developed an attitude where he expects everything to come to him easy. Maybe it's because his rookie year *did* come easy to him, or maybe he just gets completely frustrated at the thought of losing.

THE FABULOUS BLONDS

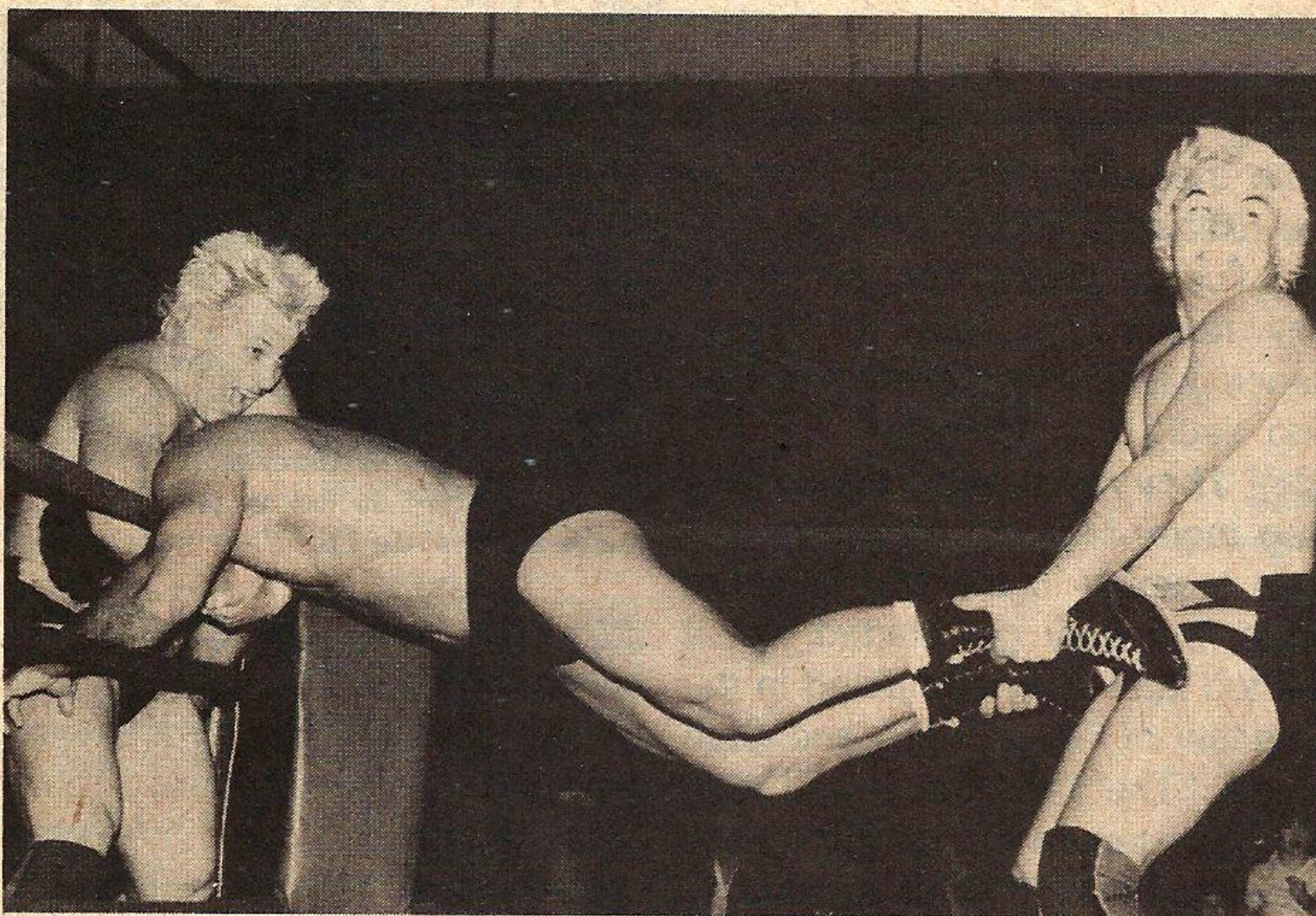


Whatever the reasons, Embry acts like a spoiled child, and that's the main factor working against the team. Sitting on the floor outside the ring literally crying about what the other team did to him is downright embarrassing. It's no wonder the ringside fans hold out baby bottles when Embry comes to the ring.

Seeing such reactions from Embry in turn frustrates me, because I know that the kid has plenty of talent, and I know that Timbs has talent to burn as well. Indeed, Timbs may be one of the most underrated tag team wrestlers in the sport today, if only for the fact that he's been able to hold The Fabulous Blonds together by withstanding the crap that Embry has been dishing out.

"Eric's a good tag team partner," Timbs recently told me. "He's the kind of a guy who maybe has a little trouble getting down to business, but once he *does* get down to business, he's as dangerous in that ring as anyone else in the sport."

But who wants a partner who might be spending valuable time early in the match complaining about what the other team is doing? Personally, if I were Timbs,



I'd want a partner who could get right down to it as soon as the bell rings.

Hey, I give Timbs a hell of a lot of credit. He's trying to turn Embry back into the wrestler he could have been, back into the kind of wrestler that was hinted at during his rookie days. And for that I give Timbs an "A" for effort. He probably sees in Embry what I see in Embry: a kid with enormous skills who's simply slipped off the track a bit and needs a little guidance and help to get his career in order.

See, most of the talent in this

team remains unrealized. They already exhibit a high caliber of teamwork, and they both have an impressive repertoire of moves and maneuvers. If those natural talents could be supplemented by the proper ring attitude, The Fabulous Blonds could be unbeatable.

But there's Embry again: sitting on the floor, bawling his eyes out. You can almost picture the guy wearing a diaper and booties instead of wrestling trunks and boots. *Damn!* I wish he could get his act together.

So, I'm sure, does Timbs. □

ON ASSIGNMENT

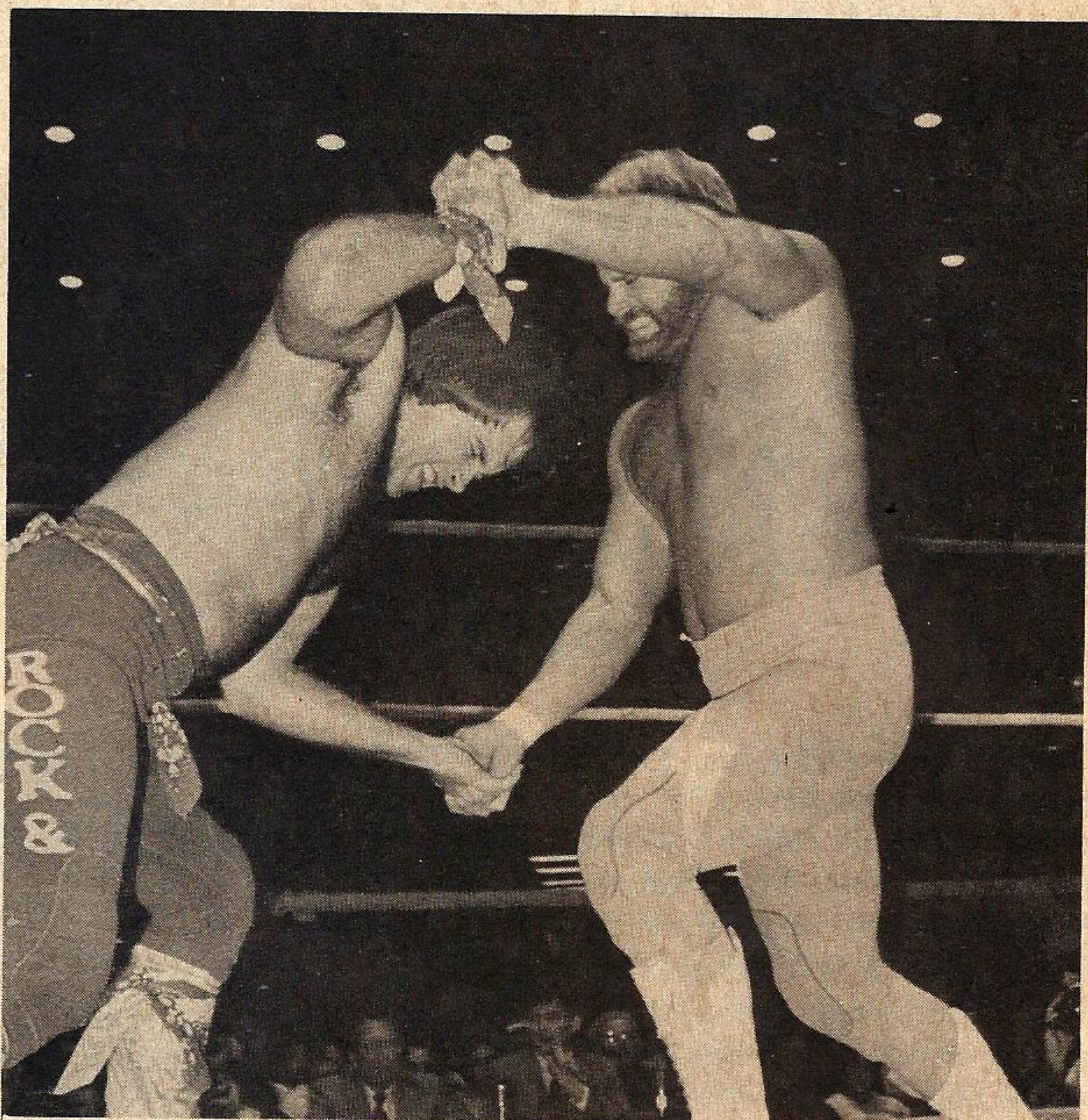
(Continued from page 18)

a 25-word essay explaining why they wanted to go out with Morton and Gibson, and include a photo of themselves with their entry. Even though it will be late, I'm going to write my essay. There's one other rule I'm going to break; I'm going to write just a little bit more than 25 words.

Why I Want to go Out With The Rock 'n' Roll Express

I thought this would be an easy essay to write, because I can't imagine why anyone wouldn't want to go out on a date with Rick Morton and Robert Gibson. When I sat down to write it, however, I realized that there are so many reasons to want to go out with these two men that it would be difficult to know where to start. So, I've decided to very simply list my reasons in order of importance with an explanation following each:

1 They're a very successful tag team: Morton and Gibson began teaming in the Mid-Southern area, but they got started just a bit too late. They competed in the shadow of Steve Keirn and Stan Lane, "The Fabulous Ones," during their tenure in that part of the country. I think that it's a tribute to their talent that they got as much attention as they did. They work very well together, which is a credit to their intense physical and mental training regimen. When The Rock 'n' Roll Express moved on to the Mid-South area, they finally received the credit they were due. They quickly attained a huge fan following and then won the Mid-South tag team title from The Midnight Express. I find success a very attractive attribute in a man. It shows that he possesses the degree of perseverance, the discipline, and the talent, to make anything work.



Gibson and Stan Lane lock up for a test of strength. Both members of The Rock 'n' Roll Express possess qualities that Liz Hunter finds attractive in a man.

2 They have star quality: Every time Morton and Gibson enter an arena, and the second they walk out from the dressing room area the fans go crazy. They both possess that magnetism that sets a crowd on fire. Both Rick and Bobby have a talent for performing the simplest ring maneuvers with a special flair. They're exciting in the ring, and I think they'd be exciting outside the ring as well.

3 They're good looking: Now, I don't want to be considered a swooning teenager, but looks are important. Rick and Bobby remind me of David Lee Roth and Eddie Van Halen. I like the way they dress, inside and outside the ring. They have a sense of style that I admire in men.

4 They're professional wres-

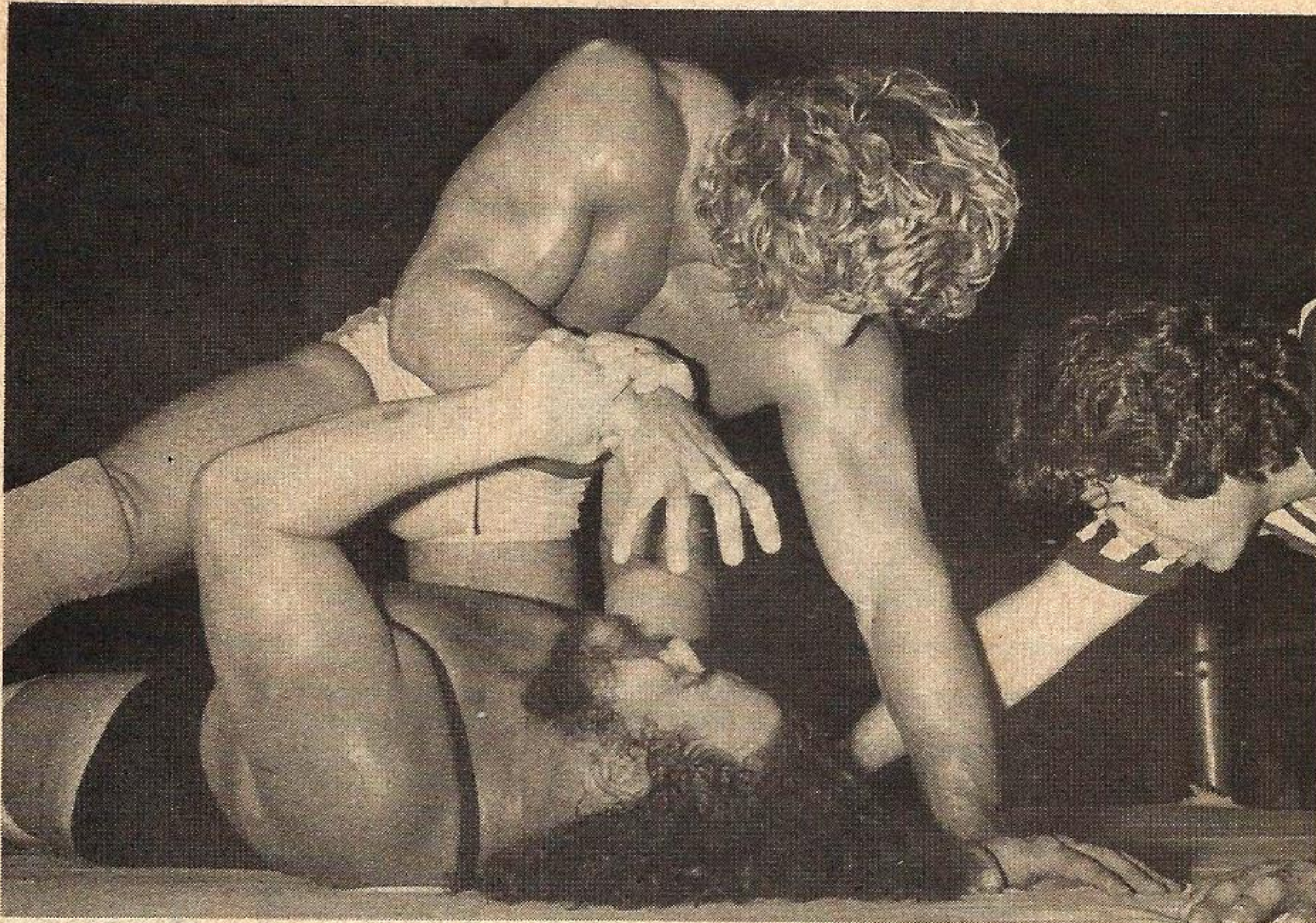
tlers: Professional wrestling is the most exciting profession in the world. Many say that the potential for danger is too great for a sensible person to want to get involved with a wrestler. But I think the sensation of the high times would more than make up for the lows. I would love to share my life with a professional wrestler, and in turn, have him share his life with me.

There's my entry. I know it's too late and too long, but I wonder what kind of a chance I would have had. Oh, one other thing, I broke one more rule. I didn't enclose a photo.

Congratulations to the winners, and I hope you enjoyed your dream date with The Rock 'n' Roll Express. I'd love to hear from you. □

KERRY VON ERICH

(Continued from page 34)



Black Bart desperately tries to repel Von Erich's clawhold, but he would not be successful. Kerry, at that point, was wrestling his 13th match in 12 days!

fense for Rotondo. But I had to start from scratch.

"When I wasn't traveling," Von Erich continued, "I had to spend my days working out in the gym or watching tapes of matches involving Rotondo, Ron Bass, Superstar Graham, and Black Bart, the men I'd have to defend my title against. It was a hectic schedule, and I hardly had any time to my-

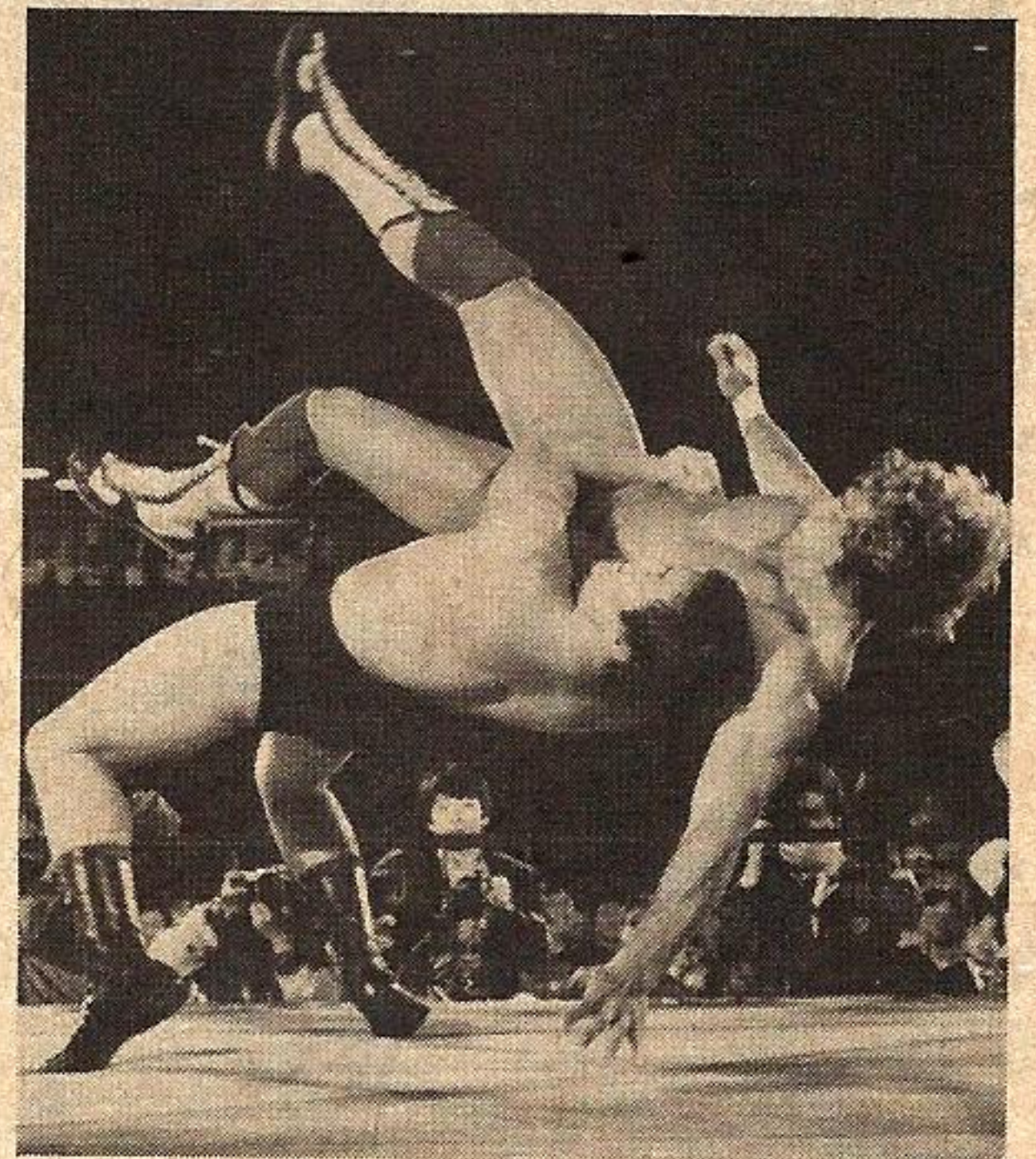
self. Then again, that's the life of the NWA champion!"

Von Erich did make a new friend in Florida—Billy Jack.

"Billy is a terrific guy," Von Erich said. "I traveled with him from town to town, and he showed me some of the best places to work out. Hey—he should know about the best gyms in Florida, right? All you've got to do is look at this

guy's body and you're instantly impressed. He's amazing. And I was able to watch him defend his Florida heavyweight title a few times. He's got quite a future ahead of him. I'm happy to call him my friend."

Japan: The Final Days



Jumbo Tsuruta, executing the Lou Thesz-style backdrop, would sprain Von Erich's right hand in the third fall of their match.

"The flight to Japan gave me my first opportunity to rest," Von Erich said, "but then again I had jet lag to contend with! I remember sitting on the plane thinking about the two weeks I had just lived through, and trying to anticipate what the future would hold.

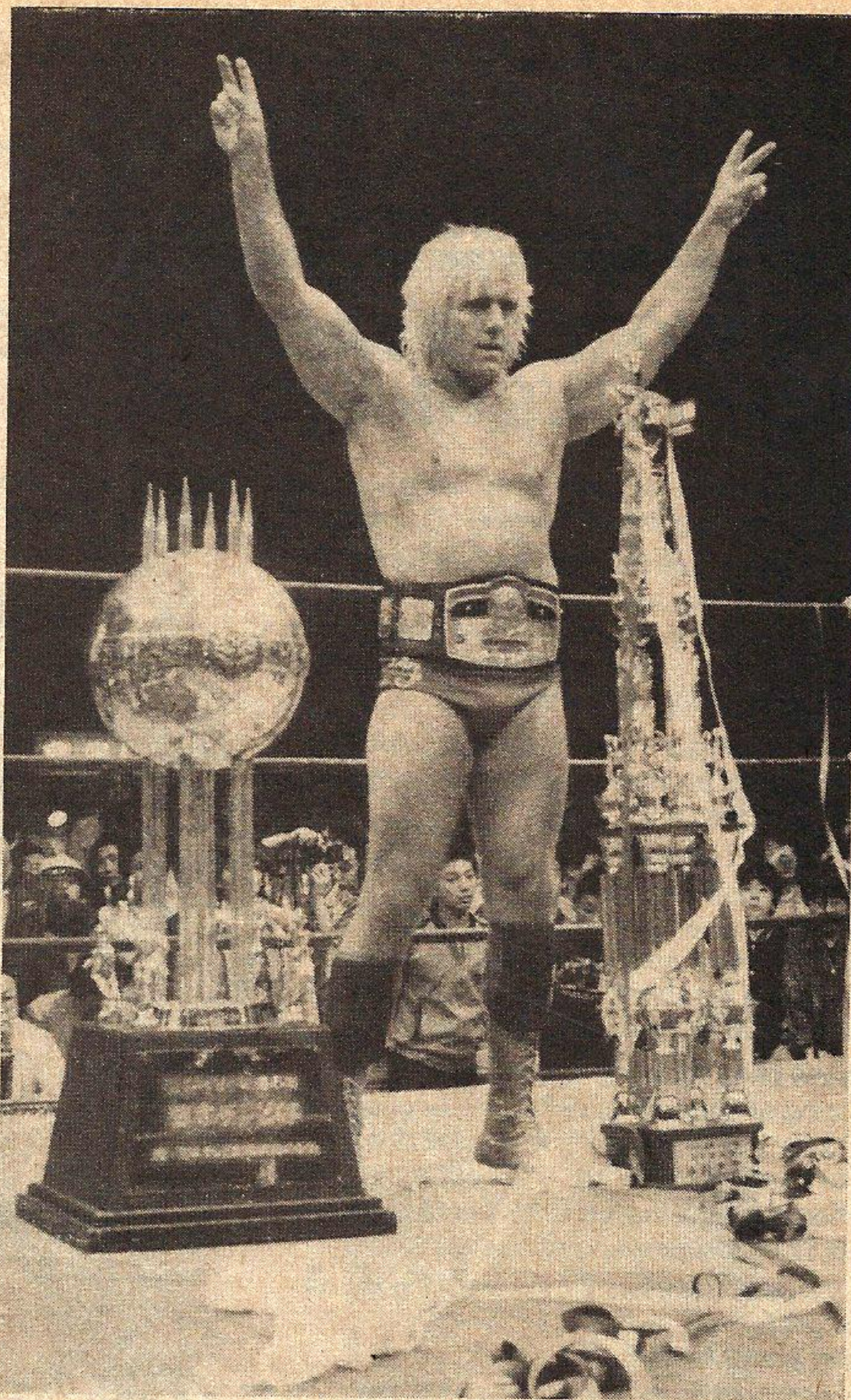
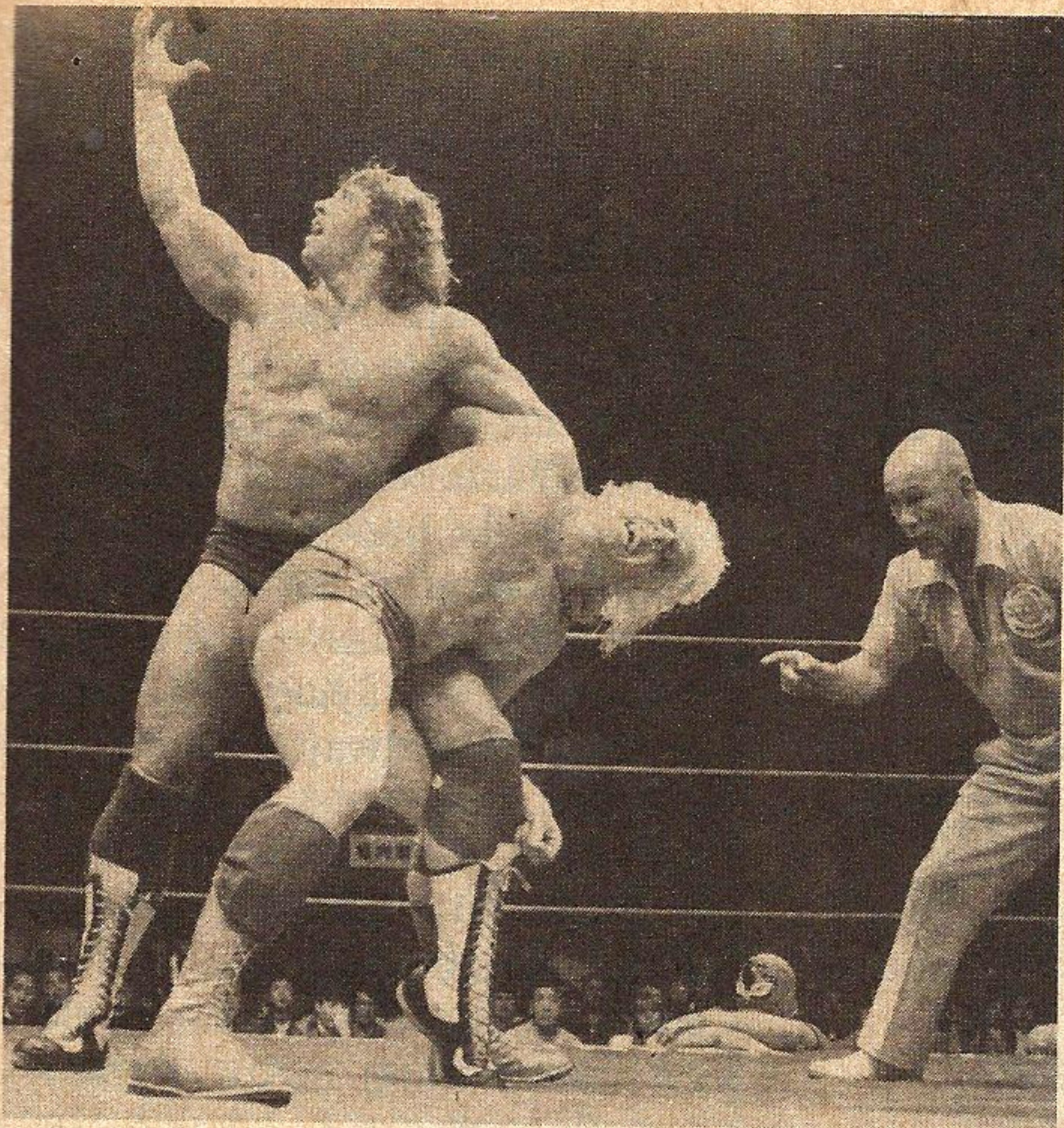
"I knew my match on May 24 would be a rough one," Von Erich continued. "Again, it was against Flair. It's funny, when I first signed for that match, it was before I had won the title. At the time, I assumed I would be challenging for the title. And here I was defending it! I think that's when it all sunk in: I was the champion of the world!"

There were two significant factors of which both wrestlers were keenly aware coming into this match: One, this would be Flair's last chance at the title (the NWA had already stated that Ric would lose his number-one ranking if he

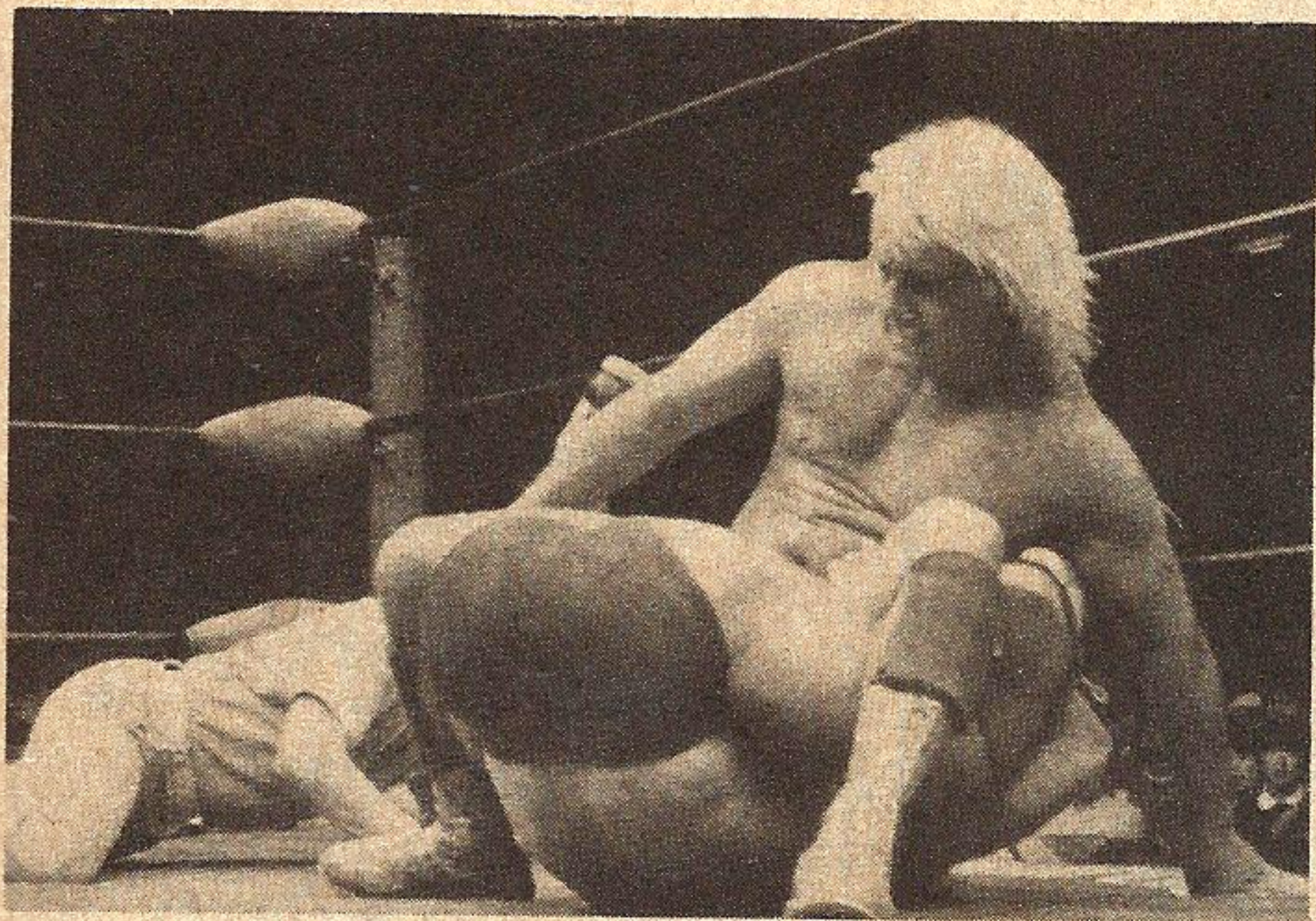
THE TITLE REIGN IN BRIEF

Below is a day-by-day encapsulization of Kerry Von Erich's NWA title reign:

- MAY 6: Kerry wins NWA title From Ric Flair in Texas Stadium, Irving, Texas
- MAY 7: Title defense vs. Terry Gordy at Will Rogers Coliseum, Fort Worth, Texas
- MAY 8: Non-title match vs. Ric Flair in Muskogee, Oklahoma
- MAY 9: Title match vs. Ric Flair in Corpus Christi, Texas
- MAY 10: Non-title match vs. Missing Link in Allen, Texas
- MAY 11: Non-title match vs. Ric Flair in Dallas, Texas
- MAY 12: Title match vs. Ric Flair in San Antonio, Texas
- MAY 13: Afternoon title match in Ocala, Florida, vs. Mike Rotondo, and an evening title match vs. Superstar Graham in Orlando, Florida
- MAY 14: Title match vs. Ron Bass in West Palm Beach, Florida
- MAY 15: Title match vs. Mike Rotondo in Fort Myers, Florida
- MAY 16: Title match vs. Superstar Graham in Miami, Florida
- MAY 17: Title match vs. Black Bart in Melbourne, Florida
- MAY 18: Title match vs. Superstar Graham in Lake City, Florida
- MAY 19: Title match vs. Ron Bass in Tampa, Florida
- MAY 20: Travel day: Flight to Japan
- MAY 21: Day off
- MAY 22: Title match vs. Jumbo Tsuruta in Tokyo, Japan
- MAY 23: Day off
- MAY 24: Ric Flair regains title in Yokosuka City, Japan



With Flair immobilized, Von Erich would like to apply the clawhold, but he cannot get his hand to close (top left). Flair rolls Von Erich up to win the deciding third fall (left). Flair, champion for the third time, is awarded the title belt and two beautiful trophies (above).



lost), and, two, Von Erich would be wrestling with a handicap.

Kerry's right hand—the hand he uses to apply his clawhold—was injured two days earlier in Tokyo during a match with former AWA champion Jumbo Tsuruta. In the third and deciding fall of the best two-out-of-three falls match, Tsuruta continually stomped on Von Erich's right hand, spraining it severely. Although Kerry could not close the hand, he would not cancel his two-out-of-three falls match against Flair in Yokosuka City.

"I won the first fall at the 15:21 mark using the claw," Kerry said, "but it took a lot out of me. I think applying the claw aggravated some of the injuries I suffered in the

Tsuruta match. I had gotten a leg up on Flair by winning the first fall, but I think that some of my worries about my right hand cost me the edge I initially had."

Flair took the second fall in 3:24 with the figure-four leglock, and recaptured the NWA World title at the 7:19 mark of the third fall when Von Erich rolled him up for a pin, and Flair masterfully shifted his weight to turn the rollover into a double-rollover.

Some Afterthoughts

"Those were the three most hectic, aggravating, painful, joyous, incredible weeks of my life," Von Erich said. "Now I fully understand what being the NWA champion

means, and what kind of a schedule has to be maintained. I think that, God willing, if I am able to win the World title once again, I know what to expect and can keep the title for much longer.

"And anyone who criticizes Ric Flair in any manner whatsoever had better think twice about what he says," Von Erich added. "Flair's schedule is incredible, and I respect the man tremendously. I always have, but that respect is even more now that I've had a taste of what being the World champion is all about.

"And I *will* be World champion once again," Von Erich said. "That's a promise I've already made to myself, my family, my fans, and to David." □

DR. A. S. MAKES HIS PATIENTS SEVERAL INCHES TALLER

By the use of traction the doctor claims to INCREASE THE HEIGHT of his patients by SEVERAL INCHES. . . . (From reports in recent national newspapers.)

Dr. R.L. reports contributing to the INCREASE IN HEIGHT of his patients between the ages of 18 to 25 by as much as 3½". (From the annals of Physical Medicine)

"MAN GROWS to 40 and sometimes 50" according to late Curator of Physical Anthropology of the Smithsonian Institute. Some facts recently confirmed by Washington Doctor.

"The Influence of Exercise on Growth" revealed by U.S. Surgeon. (From the Journal of Experimental Medicine) A controlled group experiment.

"GAINS IN HEIGHT and weight as a result of experiments on boys from 12 to 17." Studies in Physical Development and Posture. (From U.S. Public Health Bulletin.)

Mr. C.A. claims and testifies to HEIGHT INCREASE of 1½" at age of 54.

Mr. A.S. writes to leading newspaper how father INCREASED HEIGHT by 1½".

Medical literature reveals SPINAL GROWTH can be interrupted by excessive pressures and if deformity can be corrected, provided that they have not been irreversibly damaged — GROWTH WILL RESUME. . . N.Y. Academy of Medicine.

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RINGSIDE

(Continued from page 8)

Billy Jack and Graham over the question of which man is stronger. Following Billy Jack's victory in the match, Graham's manager, **Sir Oliver Humperdink**, signaled to the dressing room area, and **One Man Gang** ran over and knocked Billy Jack to the floor. While he did that, Graham took the table, broke it apart, and used the pieces to smash and break Billy Jack's left hand. Billy was left writhing on the floor in agony, and had to be assisted back to his dressing room by **Chief Joe Lightfoot** and **Dennis Brown**.

Sonny King is now wrestling in the Mid-South area, claiming he has gone there to aid **Junkyard Dog** in his wars against **Nikolai Volkoff** and **Krusher Khrushchev** . . . **Rip Oliver** has regained the Pacific Northwest heavyweight belt from **Playboy Buddy Rose**, who held that title for only one week . . . **Kevin Von Erich** is feuding with **Killer Khan** throughout the World Class wrestling area.

A recent installment of televised Mid-Atlantic wrestling included a half-hour special on NWA World heavyweight champions, past and

present. Three-time NWA champion **Ric Flair** appeared on the special with his friend **Wahoo McDaniel** by his side. Flair was speaking about the history, pride, and prestige of the NWA title that stretches back 80 years when **Tully Blanchard** appeared on the scene and started berating him, bragging about how much of a better dresser he was than Flair, and how much of a better wrestler he is. Tully then attacked Flair, ripping off his jacket and smashing him several times in the head—while McDaniel simply stood there. "I didn't see any reason to help Ric," Wahoo explained. "Listen, I trained Flair years ago, I helped him get to where he is today, and I've done the same thing for **Rick Steamboat**. But do these guys ever think of me for title shots? No way. Well, I'm through saving everyone else's neck. I'm out for number one, and that means me, and that means there better be some title shots headed my way . . . or else."

The World Class six-man tag team title has been held up. Back on May 6 in the spectacular "Parade of Champions" card in



Fritz Von Erich applies simultaneous clawholds on Michael Hayes and Buddy Roberts. Swinging his boot, Terry Gordy rushes into the ring to rescue his Freebird partners.

Texas Stadium, it had been assumed that the team of **Kevin, Mike, and Fritz Von Erich** defeated **Michael Hayes, Terry Gordy, and Buddy Roberts** for the title. Indeed, Kevin pinned Roberts in that match. But repeated viewing of tapes of the match have determined that they were not the legal men in the ring at the time. It appears that former NWA World champion **Kerry Von Erich** will be taking his father's place on the team, so we can expect a title match between Kerry, Kevin, and Mike Von Erich and **The Fabulous Freebirds** in the near future.

Mike Von Erich suffered a separated right shoulder in a recent match against World Class American heavyweight champion **Gino Hernandez**. He was not expected to be out of action for more than three weeks ... **Tom Pritchard** and **Brett Sawyer** defeated the team of **Rip Oliver** and **The Assassin** to capture the Pacific Northwest tag team title ... **Blackjack Mulligan** is now carrying a big stick into the ring (though he has never been known to speak softly!).

The Midnight Express regained the Mid-South tag team belts from **The Rock 'n' Roll Express** when manager **Jim Cornette** ran into the ring and shoved a rag full of ether in the face of **Robert Gibson**, who had the Express' **Bobby Eaton** caught in a sleeperhold. This match, by the way, was a special challenge match: the Rock 'n' Roll's tag belts against Cornette's \$50,000.

Vince McMahon Sr., the father of WWF wrestling announcer and promoter **Vince McMahon Jr.** and founder of the WWF in 1963, died May 29 in North Miami, Florida, from cancer at age 69. McMahon promoted his first bout in 1935. He was recently inducted into the Madison Square Garden Hall of Fame.

That's all for now. See you at ringside! ☐

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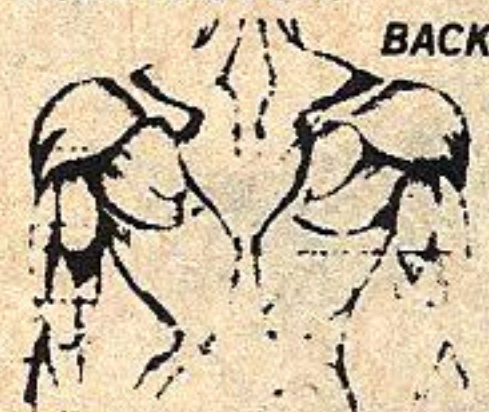
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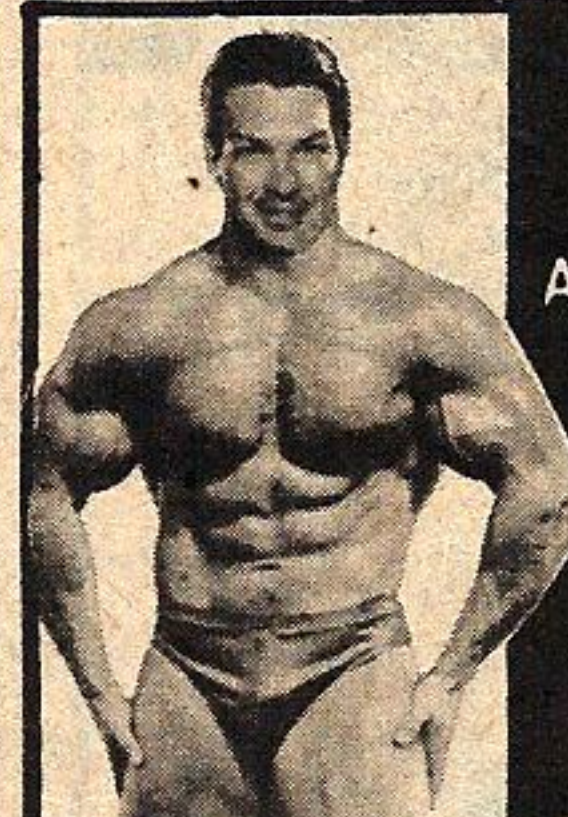
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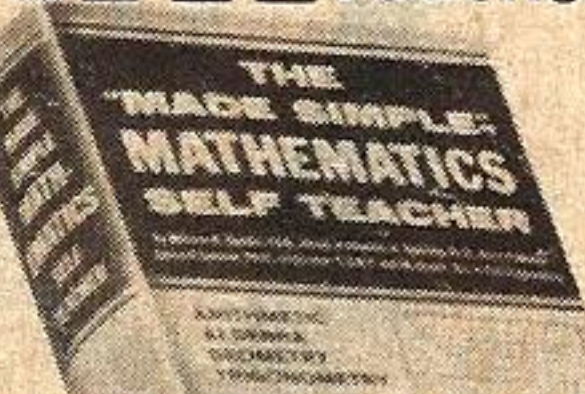
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KING'S COURT

(Continued from page 10)

tell you about Thief River Falls. It's a good example of just how screwed up this country is, just how much of a lie America is. My little American home town is not so pure. I read about it in a book once. It used to be part of the hunting grounds for the Chippewa Indian tribe. By the way, how do you justify what your so-called peace-loving Americans did to the Indians, who are the only *real* Americans. Anyway, the Chippewa

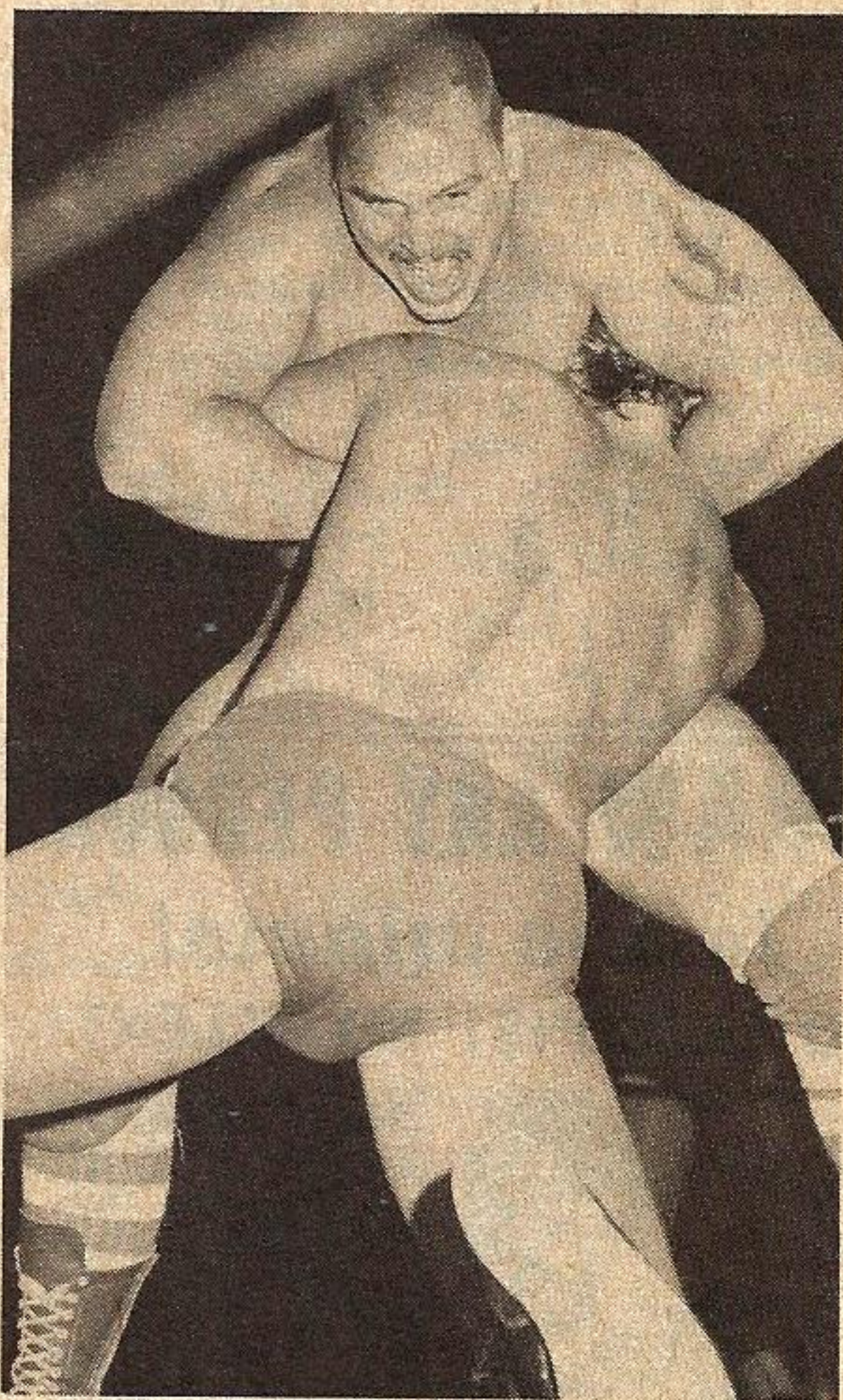
certainly one of the most criminal countries the world has ever seen. I asked him how he could defend a country that builds walls not to keep foreigners out, but its own people in. I asked him about the enslavement of eastern Europe by the Soviets, and the lack of freedoms allowed to its people. I also mentioned the fact that those who disagree with the Russian government are either arrested or placed in mental institutions. Khrushchev just laughed at my speech.

"You are merely repeating capitalistic propaganda," he said. "Russia is a peace-loving nation. All of its citizens love the country. Certainly some people are placed in mental institutions. And why not. Anyone who talks against mother Russia must surely be a lunatic."

I realized I wasn't getting through to this misguided young man. Somehow, he has taken all the good, clean values of America and twisted them. It's no wonder fans despise him so much. Unfortunately, he doesn't seem to care. He is as blind to the truth as he is deaf to the boos.

As I listened to Khrushchev talk, I hoped that much of what he was saying was just meant to shock me. He's still very young, and maybe this is his way of rebelling against the establishment. Some kids today dye their hair purple and wear safety pins through their cheeks. Maybe, Khrushchev's love for Russia is the same thing.

If that's the case, then this young man can be saved. It's just a matter of time until he grows up and realizes the truth, that he is a citizen of the greatest country in the world. But if he really has become a convert to the Russian way of life, then I'm afraid he'll never change. And America will have lost another of its most precious natural resources—one of its young man.



Khrushchev slips his right hand underneath Terry Taylor's left arm and around his throat. Forget the American work ethic; Khrushchev would rather take the easy route to success.

called it 'Secret Earth River.' Somehow, stupid early-American settlers thought the Indians called it 'Stealing Earth River.' Through the years, even more stupid Americans, who never listen anyway, ended up calling it 'Thief River.' So my little pure American home town is just like the rest of America—based on stupidity and misunderstanding."

I didn't want to get into a debate with Khrushchev, because I believe sports and politics should remain separate. But still, I found myself lecturing him about Russia,

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DRESSING ROOM CONFIDENTIAL

(Continued from page 12)

to try to squeeze into the area.

But the 60s and the 70s are behind us now. This is the video decade. Cable television has broadened the scope of the sport of wrestling, lifting it from a local to national level. For the last few years, New York area fans have watched *World Championship Wrestling* from Georgia and have yearned for the day when the touring superstars would find their way to the Northeast. More recently, New York area fans have had the opportunity to watch the wrestlers of the Mid-Atlantic on WXTV channel 41 on Saturday afternoons at 1 p.m. Even though the mat action is broadcast in Spanish, the interviews with the English-speaking wrestlers (which are translated into Spanish) had made one point absolutely clear since the show first aired in February: The NWA was working its way up to the New York area.

So there I sat with Matt Brock, tissues in my pocket in case of nose bleeds. "Sitting up here gives you a different perspective," the grizzled reporter told me. "Not only do you get a complete, unobstructed view of the action, but you get something up here that the reporters at the press table could never hope to get.

"Just sit here and listen to the fans," Brock continued. "Eavesdrop a little; it's okay. Don't sit with the other reporters and come back with a story describing how the fans reacted to the matches. Sit with the fans and find out firsthand."

And that's exactly what I did. Sure, I enjoyed the card. After all, I've seen these wrestlers in person a number of times. The vast majority of the fans had only seen them on TV, if at all. Their reactions were crucial to the future success of the NWA in this part of the country.

It didn't take me long to realize that a large portion of the fans at

the Meadowlands had never even seen these wrestlers on TV. Since there was virtually no newspaper advertising for the card, many of these fans had learned about it through the preview articles that appeared in the July issues of our sister publications *Inside Wrestling* and *The Wrestler*, and the only thing they knew about the wrestlers was what they have been reading over the years in the magazines.

I knew that the people who had seen these wrestlers before would have a good time. It was the people who were new to NWA wrestling whom I was particularly interested in. Two such people, both about 17 years old, were sitting behind us. It was fascinating to gauge their reactions. Having never seen the wrestlers in action or heard them interviewed on TV, they didn't have that same emotional interest as they normally would have at the start of the individual matches. As each match progressed, however, they became more and more involved. Toward the end of each match, they cheered and booed as if they were watching the familiar Madison Square Garden action.

The main event at the Meadowlands that night, between U.S. champion Rick Steamboat and NWA World champion Ric Flair, was 31 minutes of intense action. After Flair won the incredible battle, I introduced myself to the two fans and asked them what they thought of it. They both agreed that it was the greatest match they had ever seen. They also told me they'd be back for the next card, on August 21.

Before we left our seats, Matt pointed to media members filing to the dressing room together. "They're not going to get their story in there," he said. "You got the story of the evening from the two guys sitting behind us."

NWA wrestling was a New York hit! □

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OFF THE TOP ROPE

(Continued from page 20)

he did, it would be the equivalent of a man with a slingshot trying to best a nuclear bomb.

Dear Dan,

To a man whose opinion I respect, I ask what do you think of Tito Santana? So far, I see nothing special.

I see the same mediocrity over and over again. His defeat of Magnificent Muraco for the WWF Intercontinental title was a fluke. Yet he's still on top. What do you think about that?

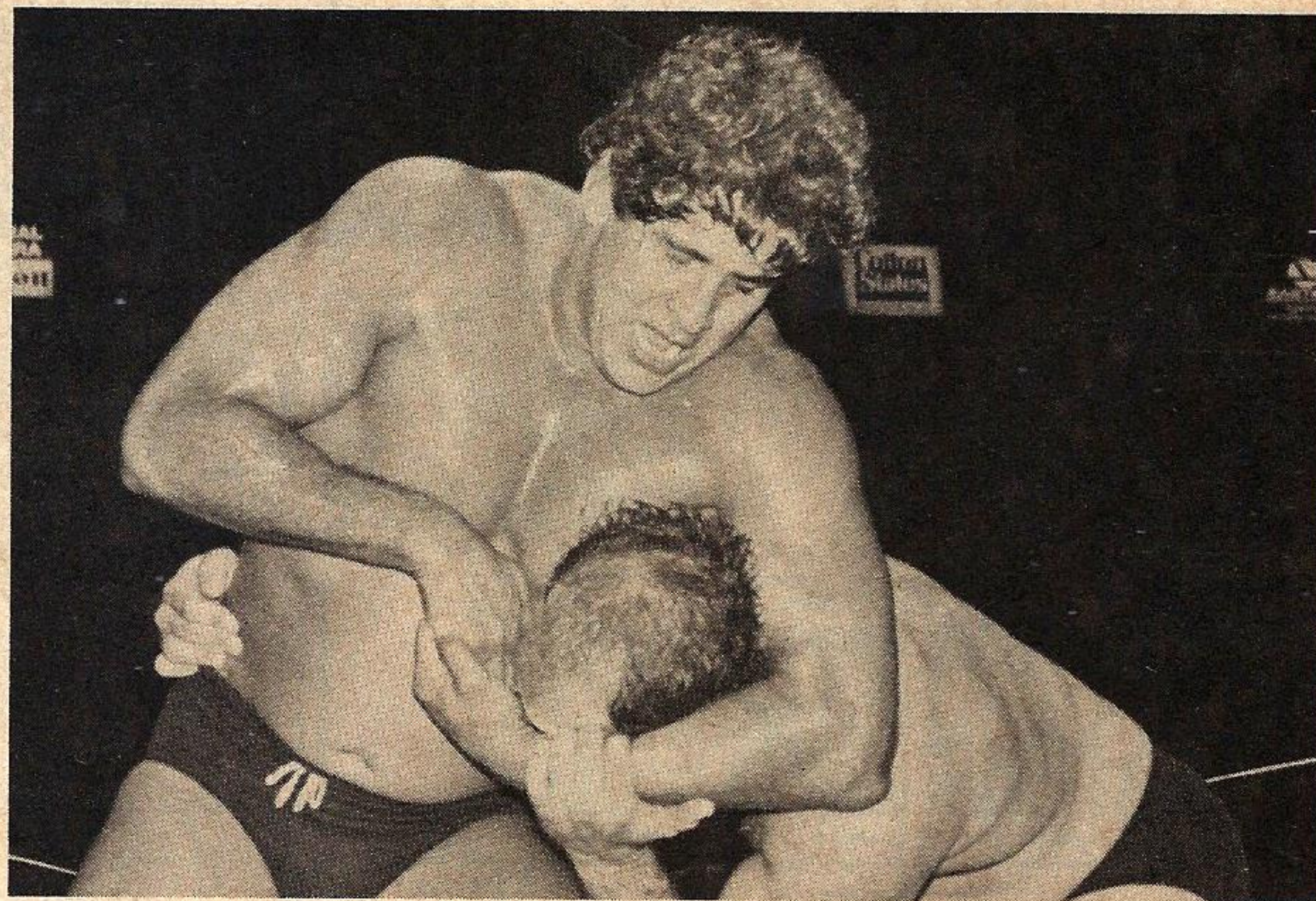
LLOYD LEE
Norwalk, CN

Dear Dan,

I think it's time everyone admitted that Nick Bockwinkel is the greatest wrestler in the world today.

Hulk Hogan may be on top in the WWF, but that wimp was humiliated on several occasions by Nick. Hogan finally had to run off to other parts of the world trying to find a place where he could win. He settled in the WWF along with previous Bockwinkel victims—Bob Backlund, Tito Santana, and, yes, even Andre the Giant.

As far as the NWA goes, you won't find any wrestlers with the confidence or stupidity to go north



Anyone who looks at Tito Santana objectively will realize that he is hardly more than mediocre. The fact that he holds a major title should serve as evidence that he has been bribing referees and officials. I commend your intelligence, Lloyd Lee.

Dear Lloyd,

You don't see anything special in Santana because you're looking at his matches. Tito's gift is his ability to curry favor with referees, fans, and other creatures of limited intelligence. Against real opponents, with no outside interference, Tito would be a minor preliminary wrestler who'd have to double as a popcorn seller to make a living. He'll remain on top as long as the world doesn't conform to the Polyantha fairness desired by my first correspondent.

and take on the Great One. Can you imagine what Bockwinkel would do to Tommy Rich? It would make medical history!

Let's finally give credit where credit is due. Nick Bockwinkel is simply the best there is.

CRAIG COOK
Omaha, NE

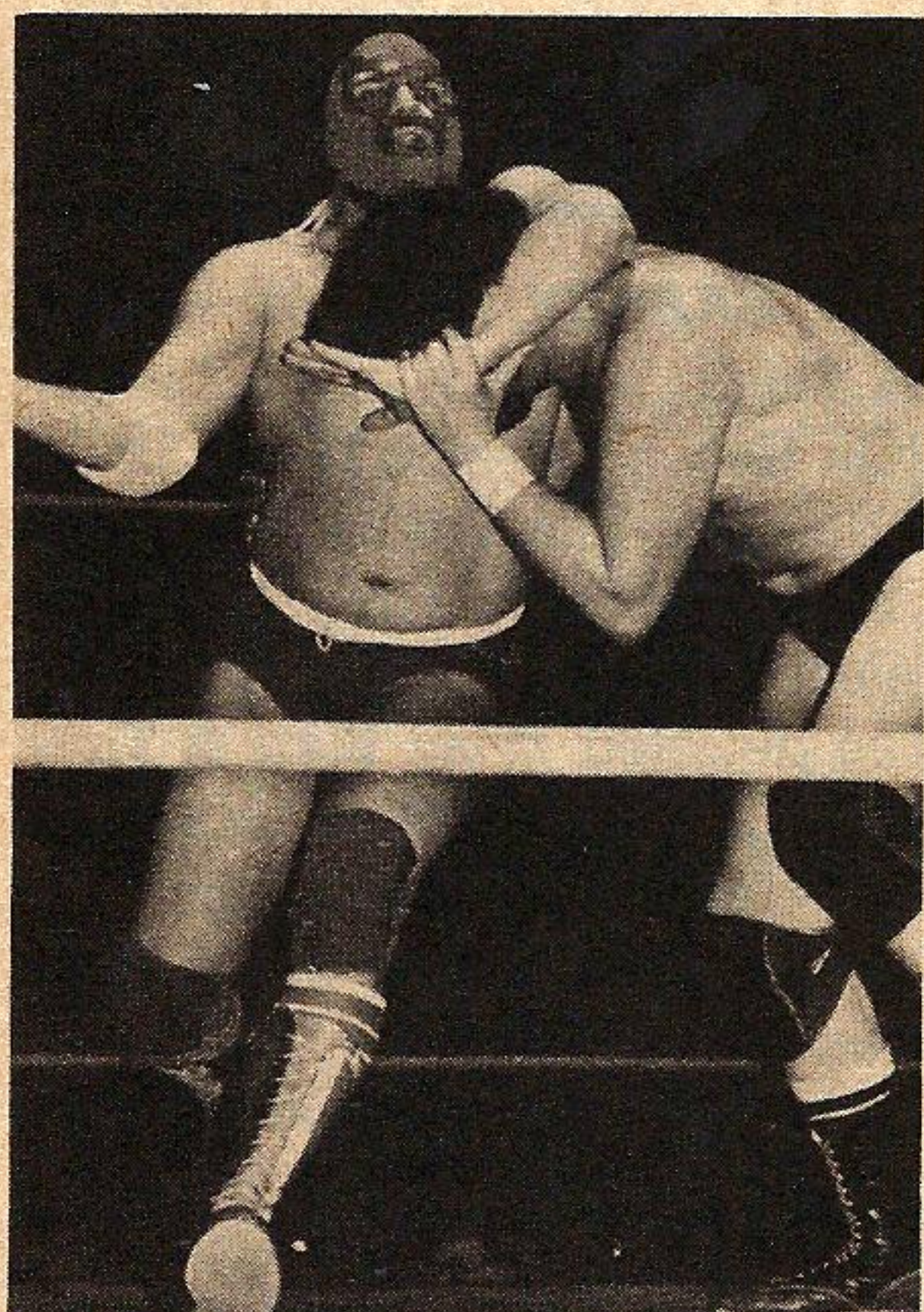
Dear Craig,

While I've always contended it's impossible to choose one best wrestler, and though Bockwinkel is no longer AWA champion, he has certainly earned the right to be consid-

ered one of the best. As for those you've mentioned as his victims, their careers will be simply asterisks when the history of wrestling is written.

Dear Shocket,

This is in regard to your opinion about such wrestlers as Dusty Rhodes, Jimmy Valiant, and Tommy Rich wearing masks. This has never been proven to be true.



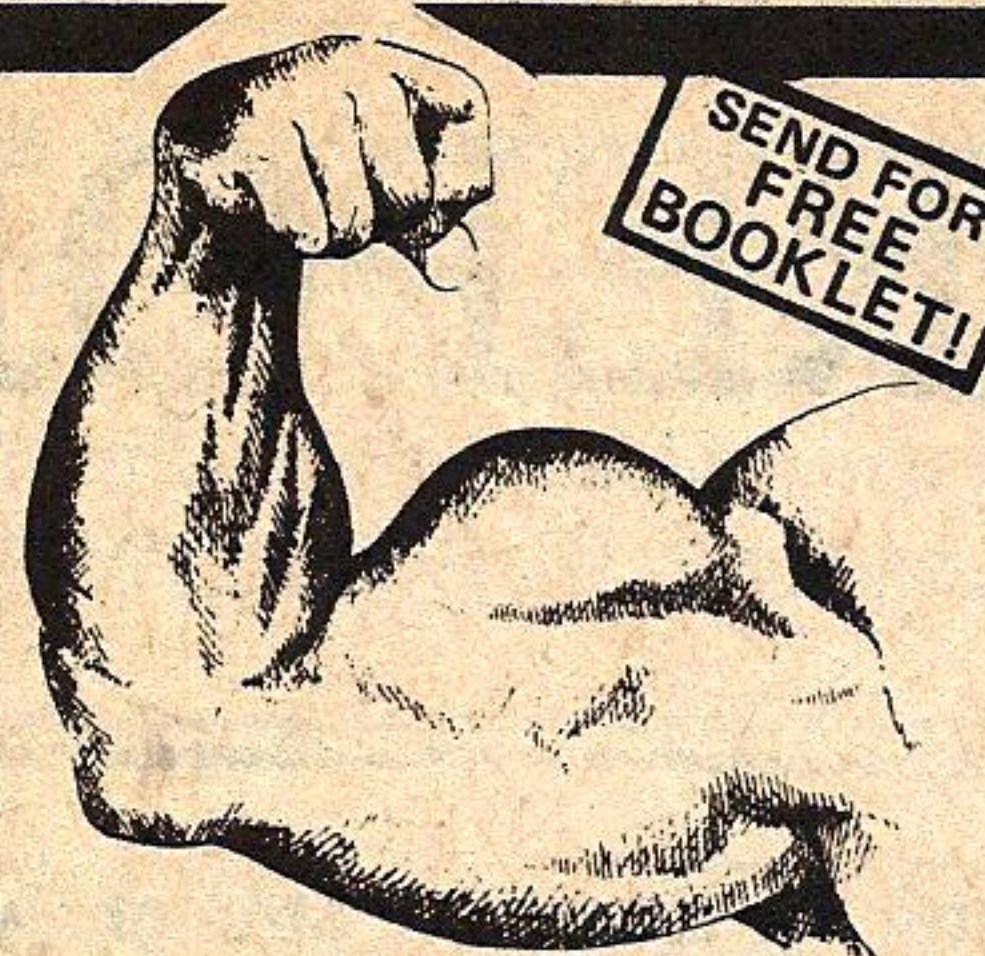
Wrestling fans amaze me. How could they support a man like Tommy Rich when he puts on a mask and tries to make fools of them?

Tommy Rich does set a good example for the fans. Shocket, you don't have much dignity for talking bad about people. As far as calling Tommy Rich a corrupt wormslime, Shocket, you don't know the meaning of fair play and decency.

BARBARA MARTIN
Atlanta

Dear Martin,

I may not know the meaning of fair play, but I have a vague idea about what it means to sign a contract and then violate it. And as for it never being proven that these craven liars—Rhodes, Valiant and Rich—never wore a mask, let's not be simpleminded. Everybody knew and cheered that these men turned their backs on their written word. In Rhodes' case especially, do you really want to live in a world where two people have that physique? ☐



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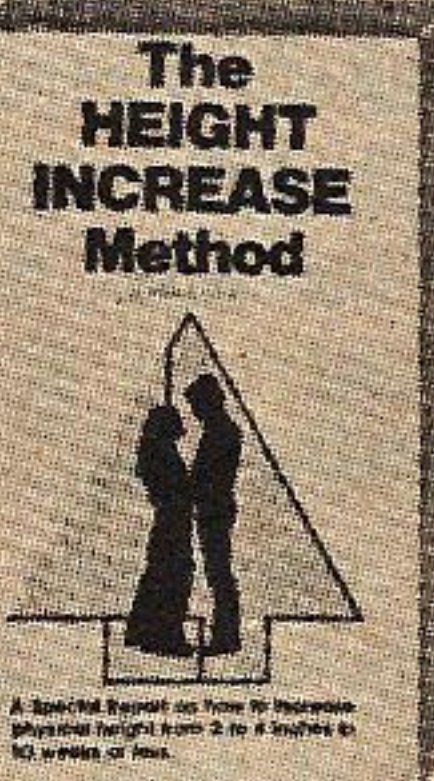
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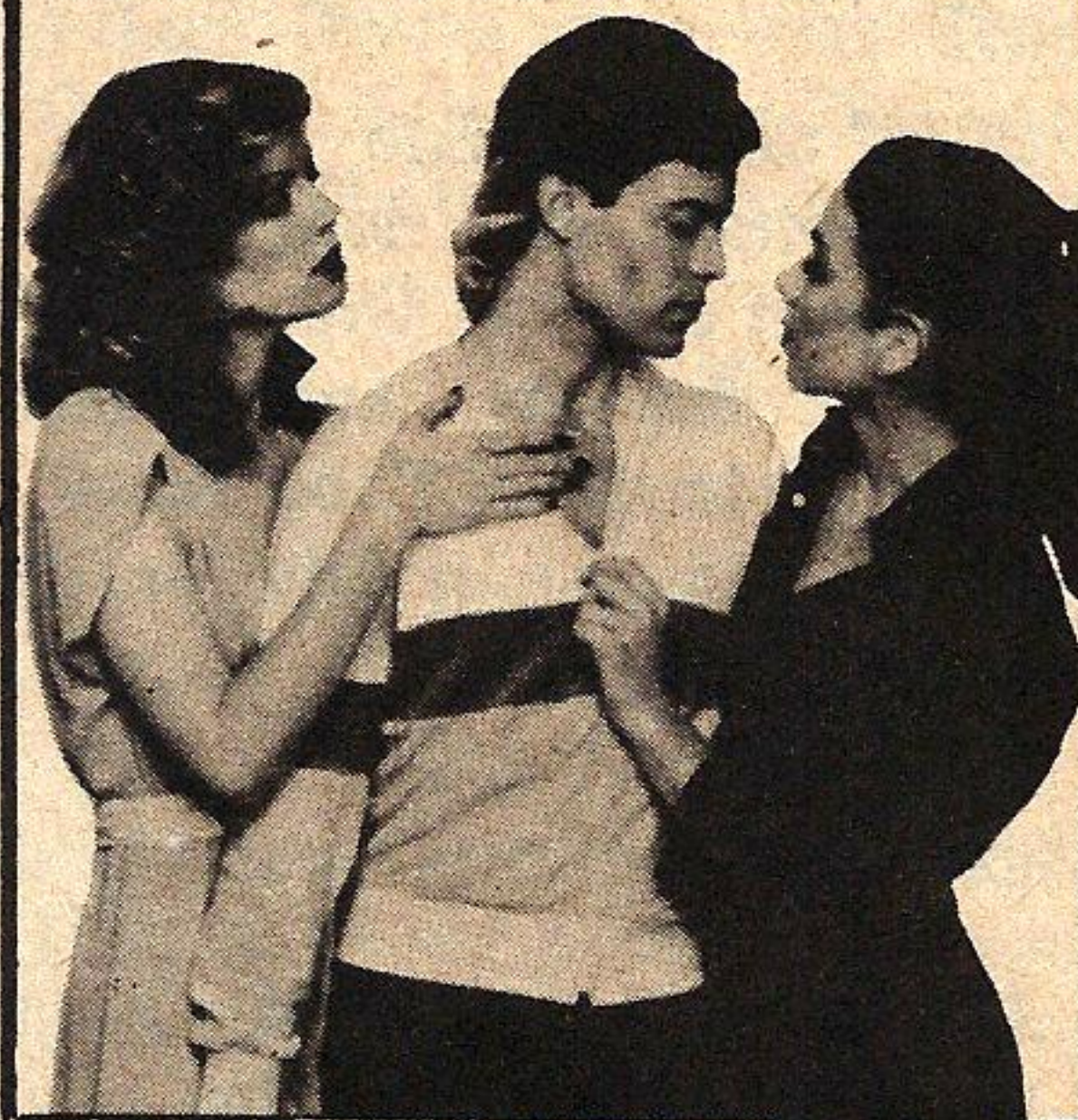
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ARENA REPORT

CIVIC ARENA (Pittsburgh): Sgt. Slaughter vs. Iron Sheik ended in a double-disqualification ... David Shultz defeated Ivan Putski by countout ... Bob Backlund defeated Samoan Afa ... Tito Santana defeated Samoan Samala ... Rocky Johnson defeated Samoan Sika ... Bobo Brazil defeated Tiger Chung Lee by disqualification ... Terry Daniels defeated Johnny Valiant ... Rene Goulet defeated Jose Luis Rivera.

—Mike L. Rossi

KIEL AUDITORIUM (St. Louis): Hulk Hogan defeated Paul Orndorff by disqualification ... Superfly Snuka defeated Roddy Piper by countout ... John Studd defeated S.D. Jones ... Spike Huber & Brian Blair defeated Pat & Mike Kelly ... Jesse Ventura defeated Brian Madden ... Magnificent Muraco defeated Salvatore Bellomo ... Greg Valentine defeated Tony Garea ... Cowboy Bob Orton defeated Billy Travis ... Alexis Smirnoff defeated Lanny Kean.

—Patrick S. Burns

CIVIC CENTER (Erie, PA): Sgt. Slaughter vs. Iron Sheik ended in a double-disqualification ... Bob Backlund defeated Greg Valentine by disqualification ... Superfly Snuka defeated Mr. Fuji ... Rocky Johnson & Bobo Brazil defeated Samoans Afa & Samala ... Salvatore Bellomo drew with Rene Goulet ... S.D. Jones defeated Jose Luis Rivera.

—Tina Wolski

CINCINNATI GARDENS (Cincinnati): Sgt. Slaughter defeated David Shultz ... Superfly Snuka defeated Greg Valentine ... Magnificent Muraco defeated Salvatore Bellomo ... Paul Orndorff defeated S.D. Jones ... Chief Jay Strongbow defeated Tiger Chung Lee ... Rene Goulet defeated Billy Travis ... Tony Garea defeated Mr. Fuji ... Terry Daniels defeated Lanny Kean.

—Matthew Reynolds

THE BREAKAWAY (Akron, OH): Sgt. Slaughter defeated Paul Orndorff ... Bob Backlund defeated David Shultz by disqualification ... Ivan Putski defeated Magnificent Muraco ... Chief Jay

Strongbow defeated Mr. Fuji ... Tony Garea defeated Rene Goulet ... Terry Daniels drew with Salvatore Bellomo ... Brian Blair defeated Tiger Chung Lee.

—Dave Stafford

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN (New York): Sgt. Slaughter vs. Iron Sheik ended in a double-disqualification ... Hulk Hogan defeated David Shultz ... Paul Orndorff defeated Tito Santana by countout ... Superfly Snuka defeated Greg Valentine ... Ivan Putski defeated Roddy Piper ... Mr. Fuji & Tiger Chung Lee defeated Brian Blair & Tony Garea ... Akira Maeda defeated Rene Goulet ... Fabulous Moolah defeated Wendy Richter ... George Steele defeated Jose Gonzales ... Jesse Ventura defeated Salvatore Bellomo.

—Keith Ricks

SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY (Shippensburg, PA): Bob Backlund defeated Iron Sheik by disqualification ... Ivan Putski defeated Greg Valentine by countout ... Rocky Johnson & Brian Blair defeated Samoans Afa & Samala ... Pat Patterson defeated Israel Matia ... Ron Shaw defeated Steve Lombardi.

—Timothy Walker

CAPITAL CENTRE (Landover, MD): Sgt. Slaughter vs. Iron Sheik ended in a double-disqualification ... Roddy Piper, Paul Orndorff, & David Shultz defeated Rocky Johnson, S.D. Jones, & Bobo Brazil ... Jesse Ventura defeated Chief Jay Strongbow ... Bob Backlund defeated Mr. Fuji ... Greg Valentine defeated Tony Garea ... Tiger Chung Lee defeated Jose Luis Rivera ... Brian Blair defeated Rene Goulet ... Fabulous Moolah defeated Wendy Richter.

—Doug Dawson

THE SPECTRUM (Philadelphia): Hulk Hogan and Iron Sheik were both counted out of the ring ... Sgt. Slaughter defeated David Shultz ... Tito Santana defeated Greg Valentine by disqualification ... Samoan Afa defeated Salvatore Bellomo

This special feature is for all fans who want to know who won and who lost . . . and how. *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* will print eyewitness reports from correspondents who attend the matches. If you'd like to have your correspondent report printed in the world's largest-selling wrestling magazine, send it to:
Arena Report; PWI; Box 48; Rockville Centre, NY 11571

... Rocky Johnson defeated Samoan Samala ... Buzz Sawyer defeated Tonga Kid ... Brian Blair defeated Ron Shaw ... Rene Goulet defeated Akira Maeda ... Tiger Chung Lee defeated Jose Luis Rivera ... Susan Starr & Donna Christantello defeated Wendy Richter & Peggy Lee.

—Joseph Love

WESTCHESTER COUNTY CENTER (White Plains, NY): Hulk Hogan drew with David Shultz ... Tito Santana defeated Tiger Chung Lee ... Superfly Snuka defeated Ron Shaw ... Paul Orndorff defeated Salvatore Bellomo ... Tonga Kid defeated Steve Lombardi ... Akira Maeda defeated Israel Matia ... Pete Sanchez drew with Terry Daniels.

—David Levy

WAR MEMORIAL ARENA (Buffalo, NY): Iron Sheik defeated Sgt. Slaughter by disqualification ... Superfly Snuka defeated Mr. Fuji ... David Shultz, Roddy Piper, & Paul Orndorff defeated Tony Atlas, Rocky Johnson, & S.D. Jones ... Greg Valentine defeated Salvatore Bellomo ... Terry Daniels drew with Akira Maeda.

—David Santiago

WAR MEMORIAL ARENA (Rochester, NY): Sgt. Slaughter defeated Iron Sheik by countout ... Tito Santana defeated Paul Orndorff ... David Shultz defeated Chief Jay Strongbow ... Tony Atlas & Rocky Johnson defeated Tiger Chung Lee & Myiga ... Brian Blair defeated Ron Shaw ... Rene Goulet defeated Jose Luis Rivera.

—Donald Rhoads

NEW HAVEN COLISEUM (New Haven, CT): Sgt. Slaughter, Superfly Snuka, & Andre the Giant defeated Iron Sheik, Samoan Afa, & Samoan Samala ... Tito Santana defeated Greg Valentine ... Tony Atlas defeated Tiger Chung Lee ... Rocky Johnson defeated Pete Doherty ... Roddy Piper defeated Salvatore Bellomo ... Brian Blair drew with Buzz Sawyer ... Rene Goulet defeated Akira Maeda.

—Anthony Alfano

BOYS' CLUB (Pittsfield, MA): Bob Backlund defeated Cowboy Bob Orton ... Tito Santana defeated Mr. Fuji ... Tony Garea defeated Rene Goulet ... Salvatore Bellomo defeated Mr. X ... Ivan Putski defeated Ron Shaw.

—Thelma Baron

OLYMPIC AUDITORIUM (Los Angeles): Sgt. Slaughter vs. Iron Sheik ended in a double-disqualification ... Tito Santana defeated Paul Orndorff ... Mil Mascaras defeated Tiger Chung Lee ... John Studd defeated Salvatore Bellomo ... Adrian Adonis defeated Al Madril ... Dick Murdoch defeated Mike Doyle ... Superfly Snuka defeated Jake the Alaskan ... Alexis Smirnoff defeated John Savage.

—C. Carlos Gonzales

WATERTOWN HIGH SCHOOL (Watertown, NY): Ivan Putski defeated Greg Valentine by countout ... Tony Atlas & Rocky Johnson defeated The Samoans ... Jose Luis Rivera drew with Tony Colon ... Rene Goulet defeated Rudy Diamond ... Susan Starr & Judy Martin defeated Wendy Richter & Peggy Lee.

—Denise Inghem

HARA ARENA (Dayton, OH): Hulk Hogan defeated Paul Orndorff by countout ... Roddy Piper & David Shultz defeated Brian Blair & Pete Sanchez ... Ivan Putski defeated Greg Valentine by disqualification ... Tony Atlas & Rocky Johnson defeated Billy Travis & Randy King ... Tiger Chung Lee defeated Steve Lombardi.

—Brett Collins

WILLIAM PATERSON COLLEGE (Wayne, NJ): Hulk Hogan defeated Iron Sheik by countout ... Tito Santana defeated Greg Valentine by disqualification ... Rocky Johnson, Pat Patterson, & S.D. Jones defeated Samoans Afa, Sika, & Samala ... Rene Goulet defeated Steve Lombardi ... Mr. Fuji defeated Jose Luis Rivera ... Tiger Chung Lee defeated Akira Maeda.

—Dan Davis □

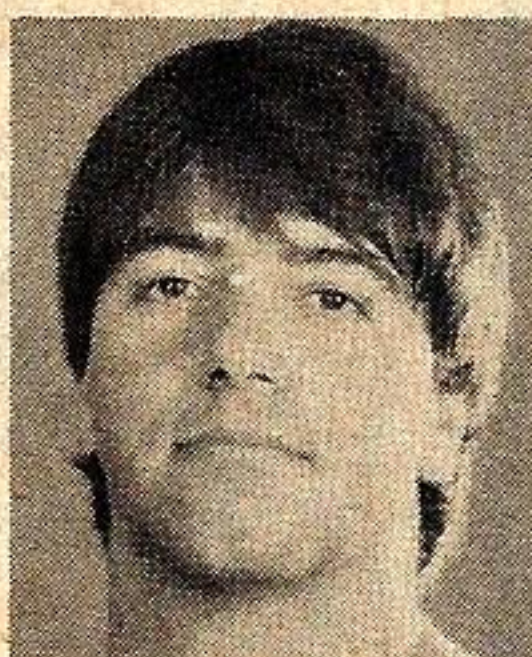
PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

T.V. SPORTS

Ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler. These ratings are compiled by the editors and are universally recognized as official.



Ric Flair



Rick Martel



Wahoo McDaniel

TOP 10

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1— RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN | 6— RICK STEAMBOAT
238, Honolulu, HI |
| 2— ANDRE THE GIANT
497, Grenoble, France | 7— KERRY VON ERICH
251, Denton, TX |
| 3— RICK MARTEL
236, Quebec City, Quebec | 8— DUSTY RHODES
302, Austin, TX |
| 4— HULK HOGAN
320, Venice Beach, CA | 9— CARLOS COLON
238, Santa Isabel, Puerto Rico |
| 5— HARLEY RACE
253, Kansas City, MO | 10— WAHOO McDANIEL
260, Midland, TX |

TAG TEAMS

- 1—**IVAN KOLOFF & DON KERNODLE**
NWA World tag team champions
Combined weight: 485 pounds
- 2—**BARON VON RASCHKE & CRUSHER**
AWA World tag team champions
Combined weight: 539 pounds
- 3—**THE ROAD WARRIORS**
National tag team champions
Combined weight: 567 pounds
- 4—**MICHAEL HAYES & TERRY GORDY**
Top contenders for National tag team title
Combined weight: 544 pounds
- 5—**DICK MURDOCH & ADRIAN ADONIS**
WWF tag team champions
Combined weight: 521 pounds
- 6—**TOMMY RICH & EDDIE GILBERT**
Mid-Southern tag team champions
Combined weight: 460 pounds
- 7—**BARRY WINDHAM & MIKE ROTONDO**
U.S. tag team champions
Combined weight: 475 pounds
- 8—**DENNIS CONDREY & BOBBY EATON**
Mid-South tag team champions
Combined weight: 483 pounds
- 9—**THE SUPER DESTROYERS**
World Class American tag team champions
Combined weight: 542 pounds
- 10—**STEVE KEIRN & STAN LANE**
Top contenders for AWA tag team title
Combined weight: 479 pounds

NWA and AWA ratings are compiled with the assistance of wrestlers, promoters, and reporters. "Most Popular" and "Most Hated" ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and on mail that comes to our offices.

MOST POPULAR

- 1—**ANDRE THE GIANT**
497, Grenoble, France
- 2—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 3—**JIMMY VALIANT**
251, New York, NY
- 4—**HULK HOGAN**
320, Venice Beach, CA
- 5—**RICK MARTEL**
236, Quebec City, Quebec
- 6—**KERRY VON ERICH**
251, Denton, TX
- 7—**TITO SANTANA**
245, Mission, TX
- 8—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI
- 9—**BILLY JACK**
245, Portland, OR
- 10—**JUNKYARD DOG**
260, New Orleans, LA

MOST HATED

- 1—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
- 2—**TED DiBIASE**
247, Omaha, NE
- 3—**THE IRON SHEIK**
262, Teheran, Iran
- 4—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**
235, Boston, MA
- 5—**BUTCH REED**
249, Kansas City, MO
- 6—**IVAN KOLOFF**
249, Moscow, Russia
- 7—**ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER**
360, Sudan
- 8—**MR. WRESTLING II**
232, Atlanta, GA
- 9—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL
- 10—**PAUL ORNDORFF**
253, Brandon, FL

NWA

- World Champion:**
RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 1—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI
 - 2—**BRAD ARMSTRONG**
223, Pensacola, FL
 - 3—**HARLEY RACE**
253, Kansas City, MO
 - 4—**ANGELO MOSCA**
309, Caledou, Ontario
 - 5—**KERRY VON ERICH**
251, Denton, TX
 - 6—**THE MASKED OUTLAW**
244, parts unknown
 - 7—**BILLY JACK**
245, Portland, OR
 - 8—**CARLOS COLON**
238, Santa Isabel, Puerto Rico
 - 9—**GINO HERNANDEZ**
224, Houston, TX
 - 10—**WAHOO McDANIEL**
260, Midland, TX

AWA

- World Champion:**
RICK MARTEL
236, Quebec City, Quebec
- 1—**NICK BOCKWINKEL**
245, Beverly Hills, CA
 - 2—**BLACKJACK LANZA**
260, Laredo, TX
 - 3—**JUMBO TSURUTA**
240, Tokyo, Japan
 - 4—**BRUISER BRODY**
284, Albuquerque, NM
 - 5—**JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
 - 6—**LARRY ZBYSZKO**
240, Pittsburgh, PA
 - 7—**GREG GAGNE**
220, Robinsdale, MN
 - 8—**ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER**
360, Sudan
 - 9—**BILLY ROBINSON**
246, Manchester, England
 - 10—**BRAD RHEINGANS**
248, Appleton, MN

OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

For period ended June 7, 1984

Below are the ratings for the top regional wrestling areas of the country. These ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestlers, promoters, and reporters.

WWF

Champion:

HULK HOGAN

320, Venice Beach, CA

- 1—**TITO SANTANA**
245, Mission, TX
- 2—**GREG VALENTINE**
243, Seattle, WA
- 3—**BOB BACKLUND**
242, Princeton, MN
- 4—**SGT. SLAUGHTER**
310, Parris Island, SC
- 5—**DAVID SHULTZ**
265, Memphis, TN
- 6—**PAUL ORNDORFF**
253, Brandon, FL
- 7—**THE IRON SHEIK**
262, Teheran, Iran
- 8—**JIMMY SNUKA**
250, Fiji Islands
- 9—**BUZZ SAWYER**
240, St. Petersburg, FL
- 10—**COWBOY BOB ORTON**
245, Kansas City, KS

GEORGIA

- 1—**BRAD ARMSTRONG**
223, Pensacola, FL
- 2—**RONNIE GARVIN**
231, Montreal, Quebec
- 3—**THE SPOILER**
266, parts unknown
- 4—**TED DIBIASE**
247, Omaha, NE
- 5—**KING KONG BUNDY**
420, Atlantic City, NJ
- 6—**JAKE ROBERTS**
243, Baton Rouge, LA
- 7—**BILLY JACK**
245, Portland, OR
- 8—**NIKOLAI VOLKOFF**
345, Siberia, Russia
- 9—**TIM HORNER**
235, Morristown, TN
- 10—**KING KONGA**
265, Chicago

WORLD CLASS

- 1—**GINO HERNANDEZ**
224, Houston, TX
- 2—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL
- 3—**KERRY VON ERICH**
251, Denton, TX
- 4—**CHRIS ADAMS**
225, Stratford on Avon, England
- 5—**TERRY GORDY**
289, Chattanooga, TN
- 6—**KEVIN VON ERICH**
254, Denton, TX
- 7—**THE MISSING LINK**
273, parts unknown
- 8—**MICHAEL HAYES**
255, Marietta, GA
- 9—**KILLER KHAN**
312, Mongolia
- 10—**BUTCH REED**
249, Kansas City, MO

MID-ATLANTIC

- 1—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI
- 2—**THE MASKED OUTLAW**
244, parts unknown
- 3—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
- 4—**JIMMY VALIANT**
251, New York, NY
- 5—**WAHOO McDANIEL**
260, Midland, TX
- 6—**DICK SLATER**
235, Tampa, FL
- 7—**MARK YOUNGBLOOD**
230, Amarillo, TX
- 8—**EXOTIC ADRIAN STREET**
220, South Wales
- 9—**ANGELO MOSCA JR.**
234, Caledon, Ontario
- 10—**JUNKYARD DOG**
260, New Orleans, LA

FLORIDA

- 1—**ANGELO MOSCA**
309, Caledon, Ontario
- 2—**BILLY JACK**
245, Portland, OR
- 3—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 4—**MIKE ROTONDO**
245, Syracuse, NY
- 5—**SUPERSTAR GRAHAM**
260, Paradise Valley, AZ
- 6—**BARRY WINDHAM**
230, Sweetwater, TX
- 7—**RON BASS**
285, Pampa, TX
- 8—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**
235, Boston, MA
- 9—**MIKE DAVIS**
232, Atlanta, GA
- 10—**BLACK BART**
261, Pampa, TX

MID-SOUTH

- 1—**MAGNUM T.A.**
245, Chesapeake, VA
- 2—**MR. WRESTLING II**
232, Atlanta, GA
- 3—**KRUSHER KHRUSHCHEV**
303, Thief River Falls, MN
- 4—**TERRY TAYLOR**
219, Vero Beach, FL
- 5—**NIKOLAI VOLKOFF**
345, Siberia, Russia
- 6—**JUNKYARD DOG**
260, New Orleans, LA
- 7—**BUTCH REED**
249, Kansas City, MO
- 8—**MR. WRESTLING III**
275, parts unknown
- 9—**JAY YOUNGBLOOD**
237, Amarillo, TX
- 10—**JOE SAVOLDI**
238, Parsippany, NJ

MID-SOUTHERN

- 1—**AUSTIN IDOL**
240, Las Vegas, NV
- 2—**JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
- 3—**RANDY SAVAGE**
235, Sarasota, FL
- 4—**HUMONGOUS**
302, Hollywood, CA
- 5—**RICK RUDE**
233, Robinsdale, MN
- 6—**JIM NEIDHARDT**
248, Calgary, Alberta
- 7—**MID-SOUTHERN SPOILER**
241, parts unknown
- 8—**DUTCH MANTEL**
224, Oil Trough, TX
- 9—**SCOTT SHANNON McGHEE**
220, Shipley, England
- 10—**NORVELL AUSTIN**
239, Pensacola, FL

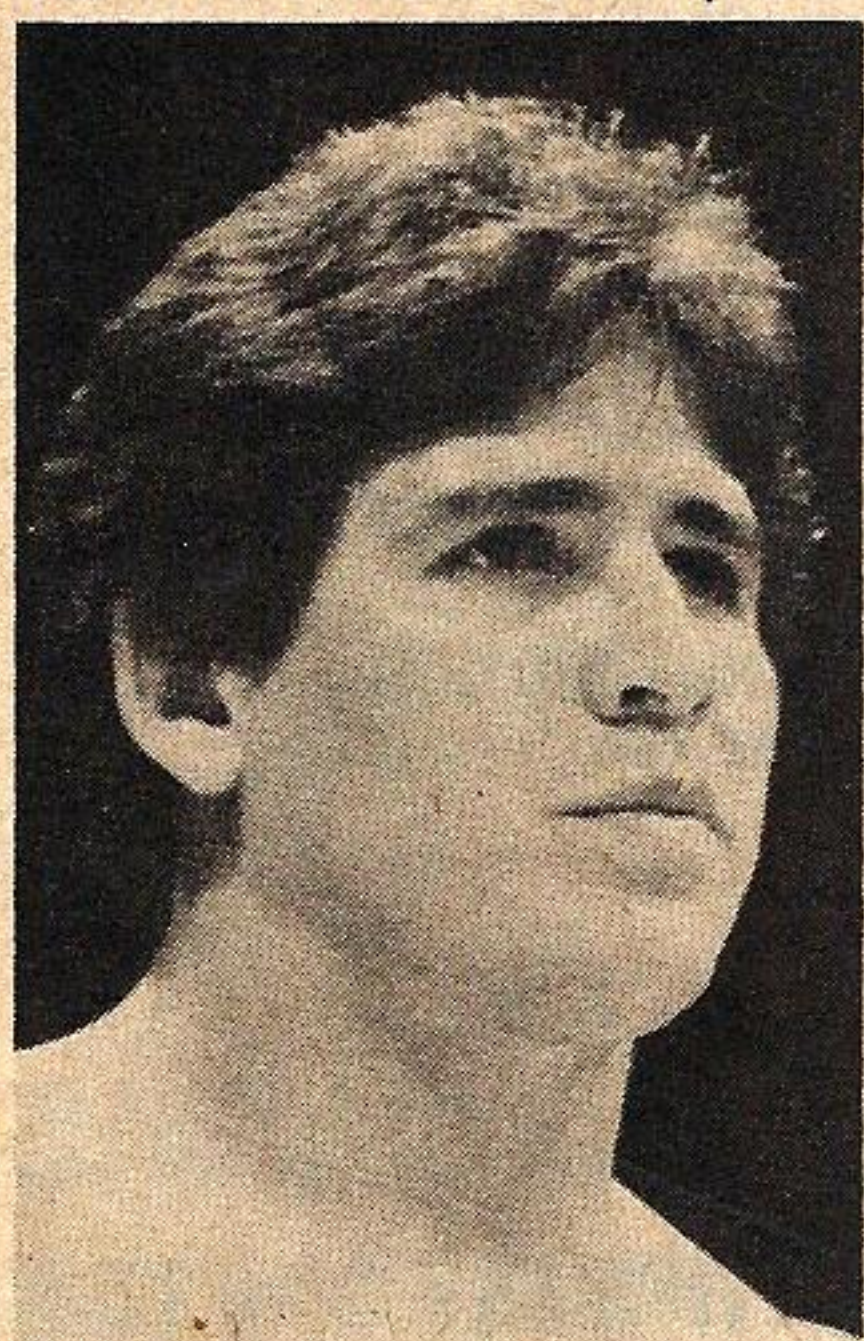
NORTHWEST

- 1—**RIP OLIVER**
245, Tampa, FL
- 2—**BRETT SAWYER**
242, St. Petersburg, FL
- 3—**PLAYBOY BUDDY ROSE**
245, Minneapolis, MN
- 4—**MR. EBONY**
240, parts unknown
- 5—**TOM PRITCHARD**
220, Houston, TX
- 6—**ED WISKOWSKI**
255, San Francisco, CA
- 7—**ARMANDO GUERRERO**
233, Juarez, Mexico
- 8—**THE ASSASSIN**
240, parts unknown
- 9—**MIKE MILLER**
260, Memphis, TN
- 10—**DOUG SOMERS**
244, Minneapolis, MN

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 150 wrestlers in 14 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

A new standard: During a recent meeting of the editorial board of this magazine, it was decided that the WWF Intercontinental champion would be rated in the number one position, right under the WWF champion, in the same fashion that the United States champion is rated directly under the NWA World champion.



Tito Santana

This moves Tito Santana up from his number two position in the WWF, which he had held since defeating Magnificent Muraco for the title in March, to the number one slot under Hulk Hogan, denoting that he is the second-best in the Northeast.

Of course, because Santana must fulfill his commitments as Intercontinental titleholder, the number one ranking does not necessarily appoint him the number one contender for Hogan's title. Greg Valentine, who is currently ranked number two, is considered the top contender for Hogan's belt this month.

The last time the Intercontinental champion was afforded an opportunity to wrestle for the more prestigious WWF belt was in early 1983, when Muraco wrestled then-WWF champion Bob Backlund in a series of bouts.

The WWF's practice of not allowing the Intercontinental champion to challenge for the heavyweight championship is in direct contrast to the NWA's policy. The U.S. champion, currently Rick Steamboat, is considered the top contender for Ric Flair's NWA World championship.

Three places at once: Wahoo McDaniel places in three separate ratings categories this issue. McDaniel's current series of victories in the Mid-Atlantic, Missouri, and Georgia regions places him in our Top 10 ratings, and in the official NWA ratings, both at number 10. He was not ranked in either category last issue. McDaniel is also ranked in the number five position in the Mid-Atlantic region this issue.

Wahoo continues to compete on cards in Georgia, Ohio, Michigan, New Jersey, and West Virginia run by the World Championship Wrestling promoters, but has been wrestling in more tag team than singles matches and is no longer rated among the top singles wrestlers in the Georgia ratings.

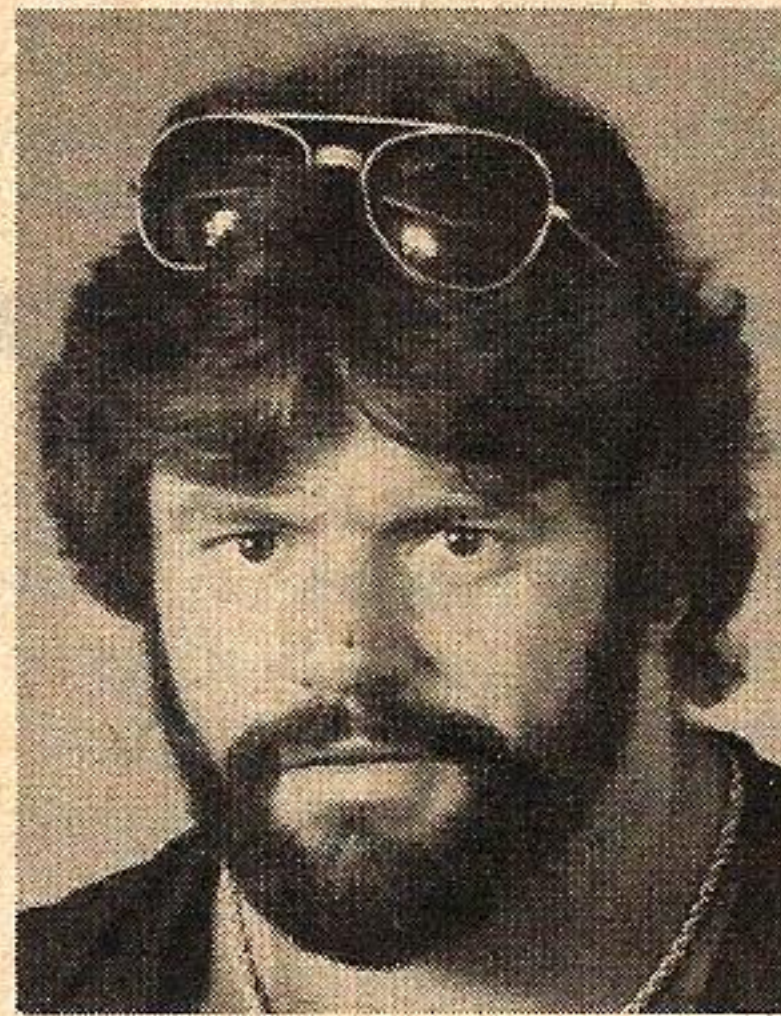
Other multiple listings: Obviously, there are going to be a number of wrestlers who will be listed in more than one category each issue. It is, however, a rare occurrence when a wrestler is rated in two separate categories on the right hand page of our ratings, the page that features rankings for the top wrestling regions of the country.

In this issue, however, there are four of those rare occurrences. Nikolai Volkoff, Junkyard Dog, Butch Reed, and Billy Jack all appear in two separate regional ratings categories.

Interestingly, Volkoff, Junkyard Dog, and Reed currently base themselves in the Mid-South region. Volkoff, who ranks at number five in the Mid-South, is ranked at number eight in the Georgia area, where he is currently feuding with King Kong Bundy. JYD, ranked sixth upon his return to the Mid-South, comes in at number 10 in the Mid-Atlantic ratings. Reed, who ranks seventh in the Mid-South, is the number 10 rated wrestler in the World Class region. Billy Jack, the fourth man to hold the double listing distinction, is rated number two as state champion of Florida, and ranks in the Georgia area at number seven after only a few appearances.



Butch Reed



Billy Jack

And finally: There seems to be an increasing number of Spoilers in the sport—not men who stop other wrestler's winning streaks or destroy their title opportunities, but men who call themselves "The Spoiler."

We will continue to call the Georgia-based masked man The Spoiler and, for his counterpart who we will call Mid-Southern Spoiler, sorry, but you just came a little too late.

The address for mail: We always look forward to your comments on our ratings system, and on our "Ratings Analysis." Send them to: "Ratings Analysis" c/o Pro Wrestling Illustrated; Box 48; Rockville Centre, NY 11571. □